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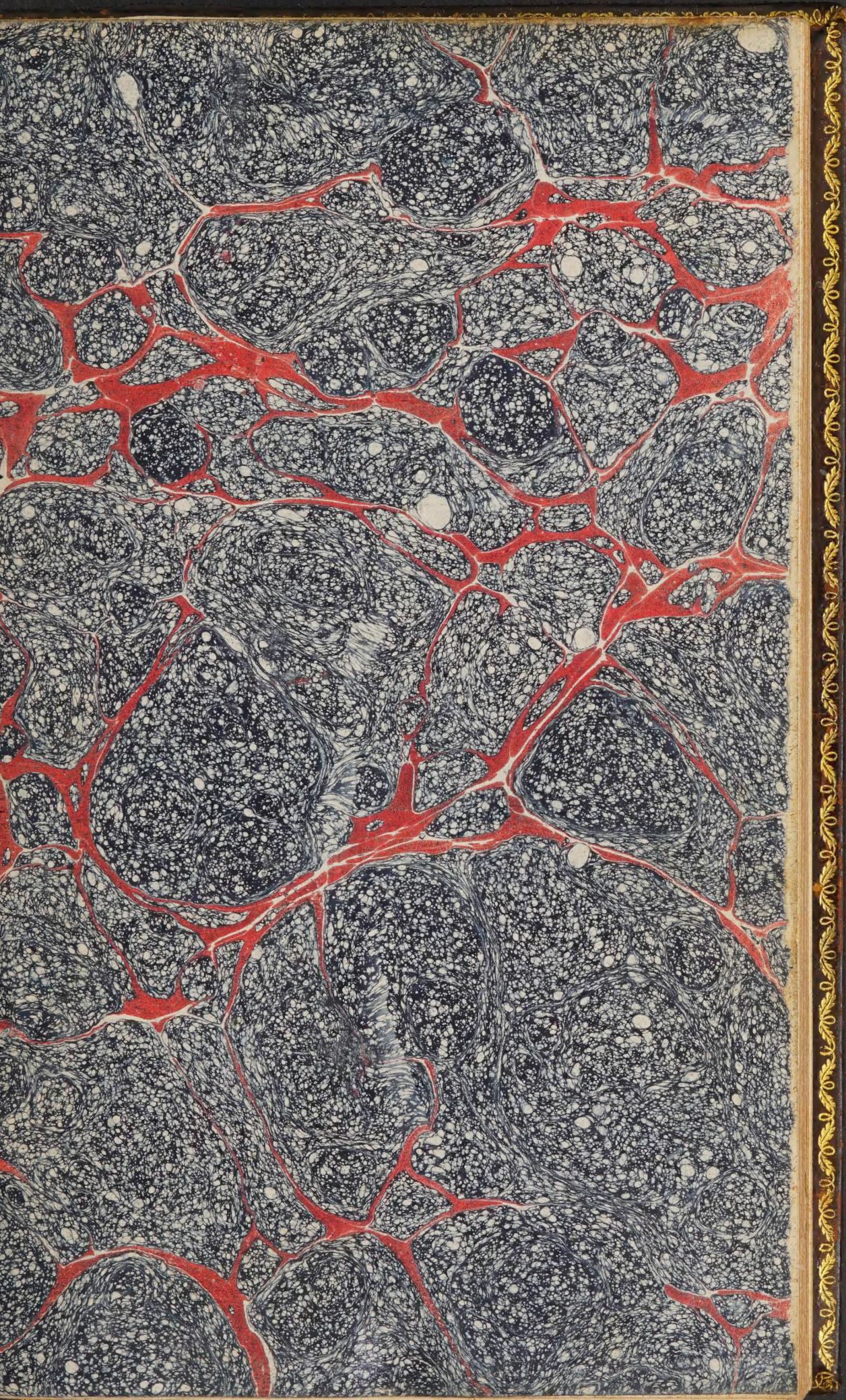
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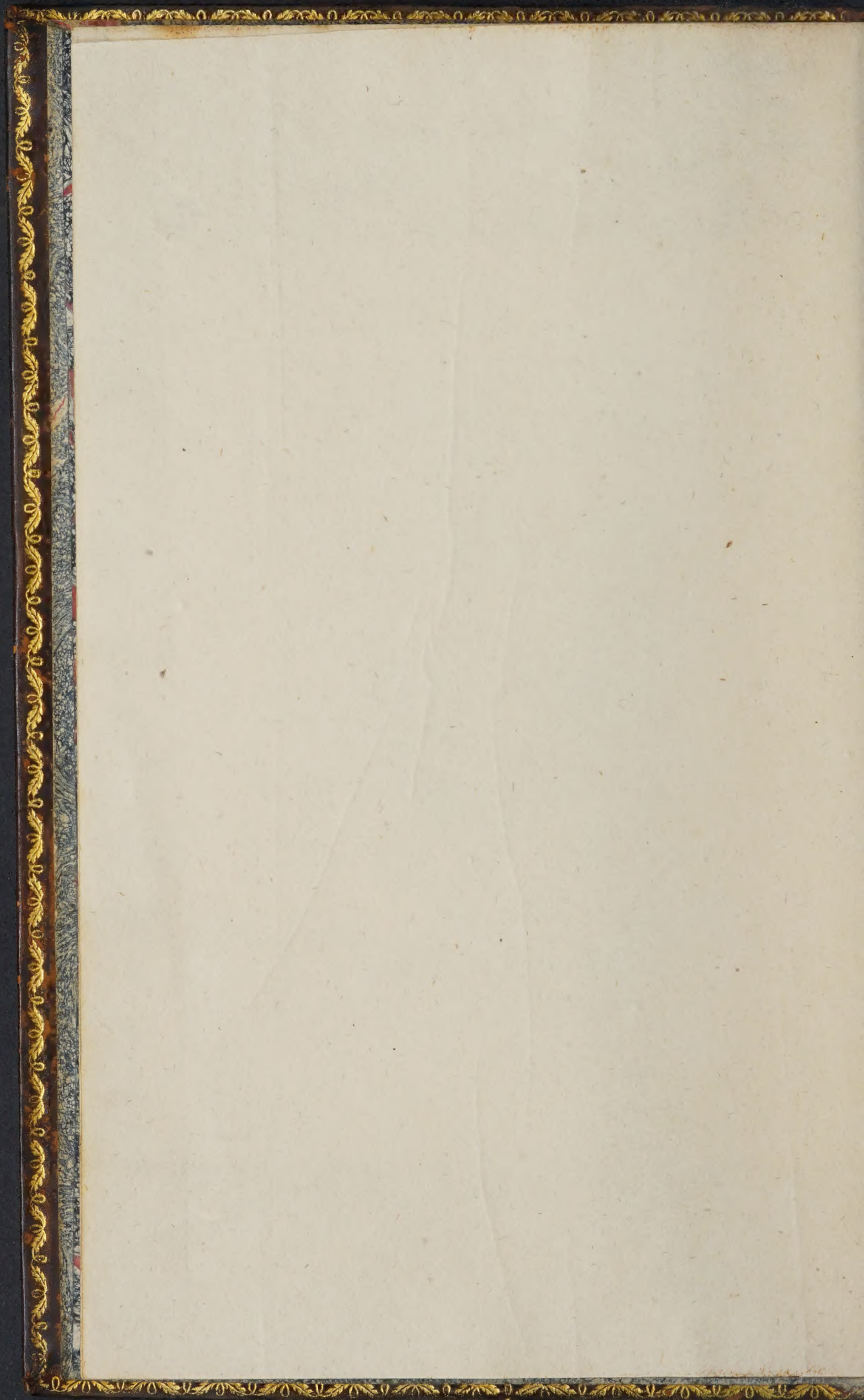
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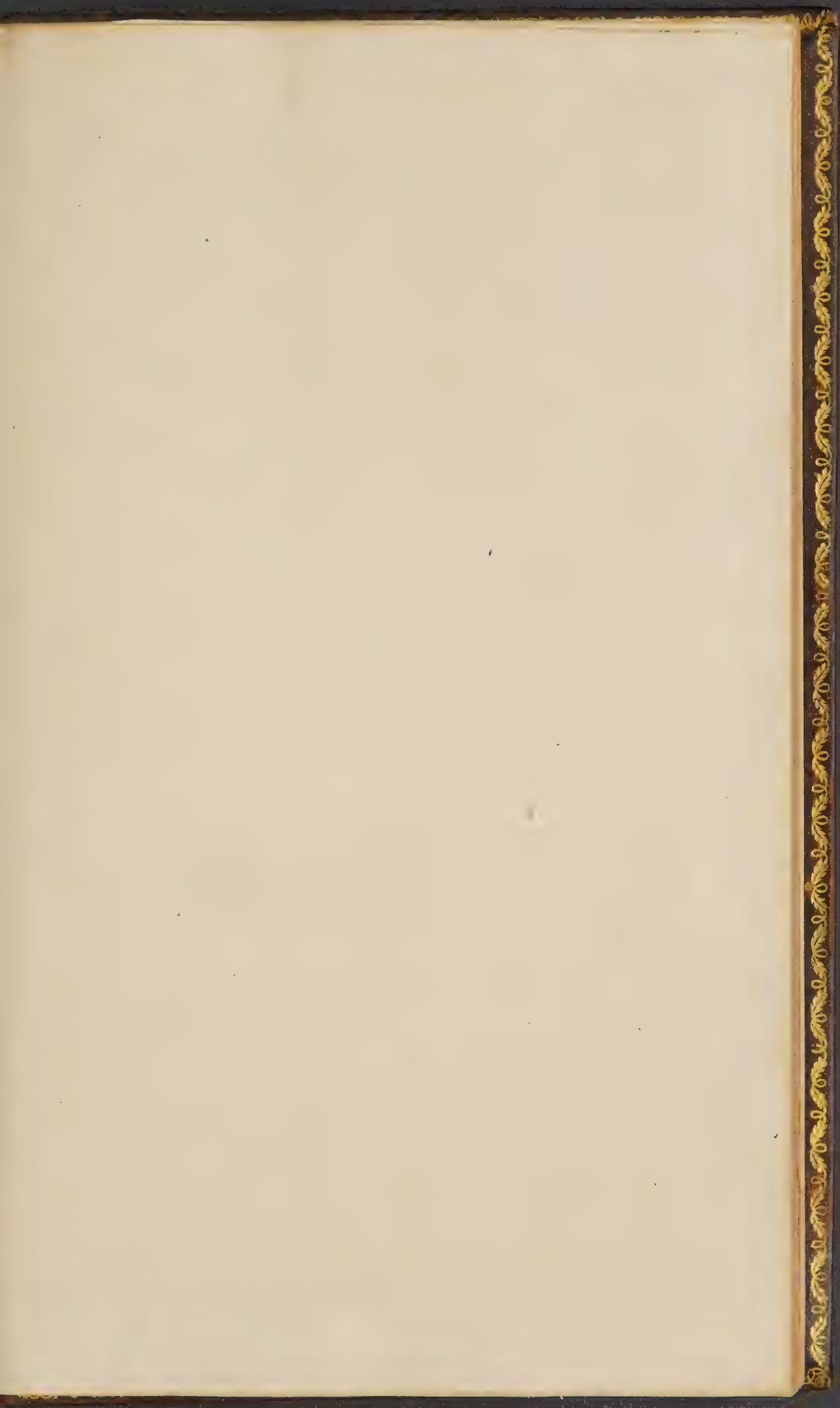
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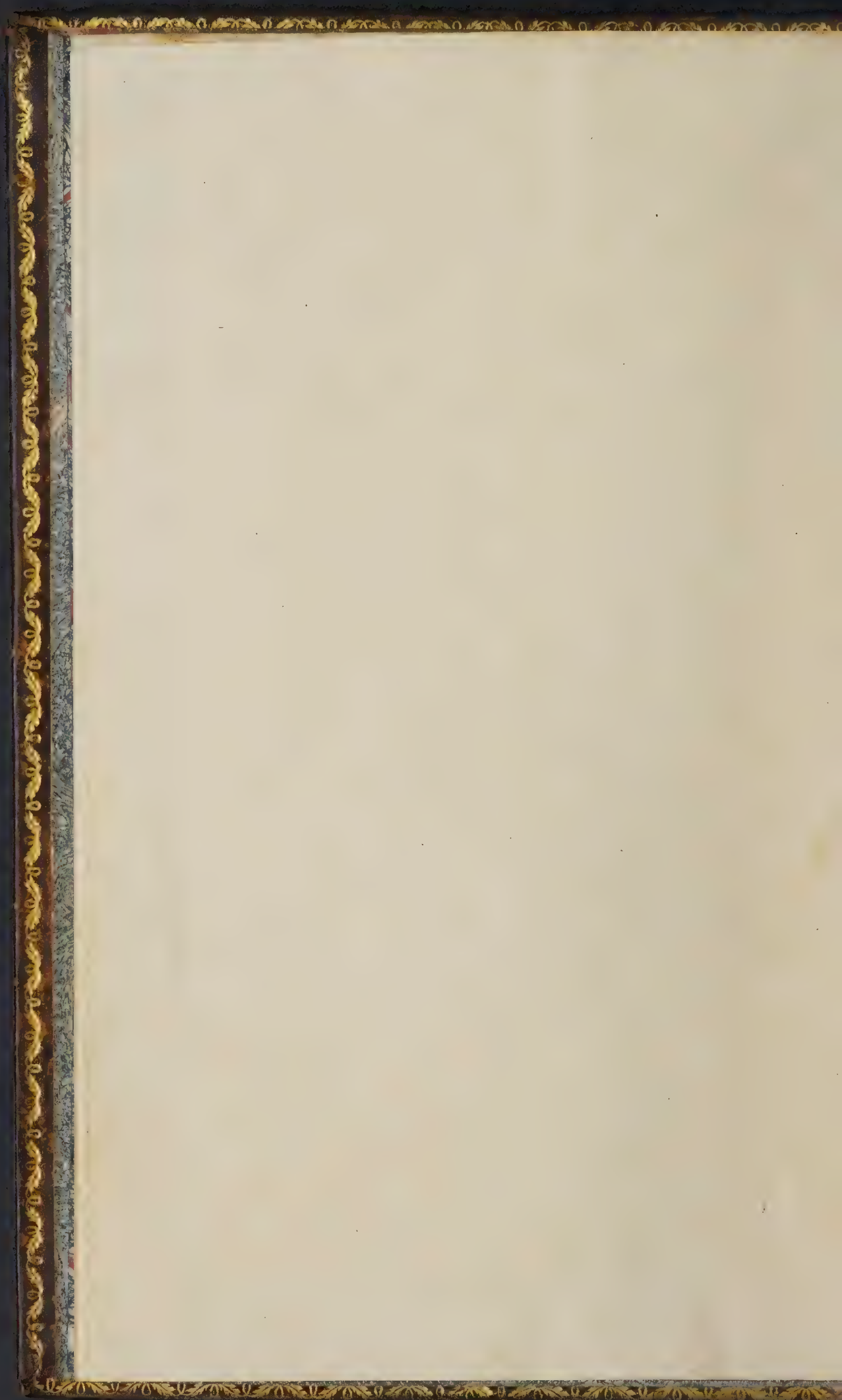
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CLIFTON







Monday Morning. 97. Pall Mall.

Dear Sir,

In order to convince ^{you} that I do not mean to
omit at all I have taken this early opportunity
of fulfilling my promise by sending you my
Drama of Fortigern & Henry the 2nd. The first of
which I wrote under 18 years of age in 7 weeks the
latter was the production of my 20th year and
took me longer time. I have stated thus much
as popular clamour may have prompted you
as well as others to ascribe mighty performances,
whereas to be very candid all I can say of
the production called Fortigern is that there
may be a few good ideas but the whole
was the effervescence of a boy unconscious
of any ability until taught to believe sub-
stantially did exist from the representation of
others. Henry the 2nd. is certainly more
finished and much better adapted for
scenic representation to your opinion
however I submit my boyish scribbles after
this trifling comment & a statement
of my age at the period of their several
compositions. — I had a very disagreeable
journey to London frozen with the
night.

and a sort through with violent jags
which arise at periods. I gained from
Sunday Morning 8 of Cork. With the
assurance that I shall visit you when
in town & call in Yorkshire when I again
pass that way (which is by no means
improbable should I receive a letter from
Francis Rogers). I beg to subscribe
myself yours &c sincerely
Bernard & Thomas

M. H. Sturt

Wednesday. For a delay of the Book I have
not sent my Plays as required & the
provision has been neglected till this
morning.

*For J. C. Egerton Esq. from the
Author with his best remembrance*

VORTIGERN,
AN
HISTORICAL TRAGEDY,
IN FIVE ACTS;
REPRESENTED
AT THE
THEATRE ROYAL, DRURY LANE.
AND
HENRY THE SECOND,
AN
HISTORICAL DRAMA.

SUPPOSED TO BE WRITTEN
BY THE AUTHOR OF
VORTIGERN.

W. H. Ireland

LONDON: PRINTED FOR
J. BARKER, RUSSELL-STREET, COVENT-GARDEN;
B. WHITE, FLEET-STREET;
T. EGERTON, CHARING-CROSS;
AND R. FAULDER, BOND-STREET.

THE HISTORY OF THE

REIGN OF

CHARLES THE FIRST

BY

JOHN BURNET

OF LINCOLN'S INN

ESQ.

IN TWO VOLUMES

LONDON

Printed by J. Streater, at the

Sign of the Sun in St. Dunstons Church

1679

P R E F A C E.

IT is now near three years since the Play, which the following sheets present to the Public, was represented at the Theatre Royal Drury-Lane. The fate which it underwent, and the decision of the audience, are well known. Notwithstanding that decision, the Editor has at length, agreeably to his promise, made at the time of that representation, again laid it before the public, which if it exposes it to the test of a more accurate criticism, will give it the opportunity of a more unbiassed and temperate examination.

They, who are at all conversant with dramatic concerns, must know that the opinion of large assemblies, promiscuously composed of all orders and classes, must depend on a variety of circumstances, local, temporary and accidental.

Where no stronger or worse motives interfere, fashion and caprice too often give the direction; but spleen and interest are made more powerful agents; and by their industry and activity, even the master puppet, be he in sock or buskin, may be gained, and the public may be too easily and

unwarily led by premature and precipitate conclusions.

No man who recollects what was said and written in the public prints concerning this piece, on the eve of its representation, and the ludicrous manner in which the principal character was sustained, can deny, that the Editor has a right to complain of the most illiberal and injurious treatment.

Every undue stratagem, and every mean and petty artifice, was resorted to within doors and without, to prejudice the public mind; and one more deeply interested than had then, or has yet appeared, though a professed trader on the subject of Shakespeare, on the day before the representation, under the title of "An Enquiry into the Authenticity of certain miscellaneous Papers, &c. &c." with this view, and the further expectation of helping off a few copies, sent into the world a volume long before promised, and long since forgotten.

This mass of dulness and self-conceit, consisting of about 430 pages, established nothing; and was built on principles (if it is not an abuse to apply to such trash a term so respectable) that could not possibly establish any thing. In every one of the instances which, with such a weak and overweening confidence, he so very idly brought forward, he has been exposed; and in some of them
has

P R E F A C E.

has been himself the author and detector of his own childishness, incapacity and ignorance.

Neither the index-lore, or the alphabetical, lexicographical, labours of this sagacious discoverer, or his congenial followers or associates, nor any declaration since made from a quarter once domestic to the Editor, through which something like genuine information might naturally have been expected, can induce him to believe that great part of the mass of papers in his possession are the fabrication of any individual, or set of men of the present day.

A fruitless expectation, that Time, the discoverer of Truth, might ere this have withdrawn that veil of mystery which yet involves this transaction, has alone given occasion to delay in this publication. The Editor had been happy to have been able to have penetrated it; and to have assigned to its proper owner each fragment and each whole.

As to the merits or demerits of the play now before the public, the Editor does not in the smallest degree consider himself responsible any where, or in any way. He sold the piece with "all its
" imperfections on its head," after various cool and deliberate readings, and stated candidly all he had been told relative to it; all that, which
from

from various circumstances, he had at that time no reason to doubt or discredit.

After the play was contracted for, some alterations were deemed necessary to fit it for representation. It was much too long, and consequently many passages were expunged; and in one historical fact, thought too gross for the public ear, viz. the incestuous passion of the king towards his daughter, it underwent some further alterations; but excepting these particulars, it stands nearly as in the original.

In this state it was delivered to the Theatre, with a request, or rather *intreaty*, that all further alteration, deemed necessary, should be made by the acting manager, or any other person competent to the business: to this request he received the following official answer from Mr. Kemble:—“That the play would be acted faithfully from “the copy sent to the theatre;” and it was accordingly acted, literally from the Manuscript delivered to the house. This conduct was, as the Editor believes, unprecedented in the management of a Theatre, and must warrant him in concluding that in the judgment of the acting manager, the play wanted no aid or alteration.

Be these matters as they may, this piece is laid before the public with such interpolations by
the

P R E F A C E.

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the Editor, as he presumes it was the duty of the acting manager to have made previous to its representation.

The lines printed within the inverted commas were not in the play-house copy, and consequently were not spoken.

The Editor feels, and here begs leave to acknowledge, his obligations to his friend William Linley, Esq. for his skill in composing the three songs in this piece, in which he is universally allowed to have shewn much taste and judgment; he likewise professes himself much indebted to Mrs. Jordan and Mrs. Powell, for their very spirited exertions, and excellent acting on this occasion; and could he with truth or justice make the smallest acknowledgement to Mr. Kemble and his fellow tragedian Mr. Phillimore, he has little doubt, but that, whoever may have been the author of the piece, it might still have been received, and might have promoted the interests of the Theatre.

Norfolk-street, }
Strand, 1799. }

P R O-

PROLOGUE,

INTENDED FOR

VORTIGERN.

Written by JAMES HENRY PYE, Esq. P. L.

THE cause with learn'd investigation fraught,
Behold at length to this tribunal brought,
No fraud your penetrating eyes can cheat,
None here can Shakespeare's writing counterfeit.
As well the taper's base unglorious ray
Might strive to emulate the orb of day,
As modern bards, whom venal hopes inspire,
Can catch one spark of his celestial fire.
If in our scenes your eyes delighted find
Marks that denote the mighty master's mind,
If at his words, the tears of pity flow,
Your breasts with horror thrill, with rapture glow,
If on your harrow'd souls impress'd you feel
The stamp of nature's uncontested seal,
Demand no other proof—nor idly pore
O'er mouldy manuscripts of ancient lore,
To see if every tawny line display
The genuine ink of fam'd Eliza's day.
Nor strive with curious industry to know
How poets spelt two centuries ago.

But

*But if these proofs should fail ; if in the strain
You seek the drama's awful fire in vain,
Yet in our ancient legend should you trace
Truth's genuine features, tho' of humbler grace,
Condemn not rashly—o'er the forest glade
Tho' the oak spread no patriarchal shade,
Yet may a shrub of no unlovely green
With vivid foliage deck the sylvan scene,
Some tuneful notes the vocal woodlands fill,
And soothe the ear, tho' philomel be still.
Then each extraneous matter laid aside,
By its own merit be our drama tried.
Forget the prejudice of rigid art,
To read the code of nature in the heart ;
Consult her laws, from partial favour free,
And give, as they decide, your just decree.*

PROLOGUE.

Written by Sir JAMES BLAND BURGESS, BART.

Spoken by Mr. WHITFIELD.

NO common cause your verdict now demands,
Before the court immortal Shakespeare stands;
That mighty master of the human soul,
Who rules the passions, and with strong controul
Thro' every turning of the changeful heart
Directs his course sublime, and leads his powerful
art.

When on his birth propitious nature smil'd,
And hung transported o'er her favourite child,
While on his head her choicest gifts she shower'd,
And o'er his mind her inspiration pour'd;
"Proceed," she cried, "the high decree fulfil!
" 'Tis thine to rule with magic sway the will,
" On fancy's wing to stretch o'er boundless space,
" And all creation's varied works to trace;
" 'Tis thine each flitting phantom to pursue,
" Each hidden power of verse to bring to view,
" To shed o'er British taste celestial day,
" And reign o'er Genius with unrivall'd sway."

Such was the high behest—the sacred choice
Long has been sanction'd by your candid voice;
The favour'd relics of your Shakespeare's hand
Unrivall'd, and inimitable, stand.

If

If hope of fame some modern bards has led
To try the path where Shakespeare wont to tread,
If, with presumptuous wing, they dar'd aspire
To catch some portion of his sacred fire,
Your critic pow'rs the vain attempt repell'd,
The flimsy vapour, by your breath dispell'd,
Exposed the trembling culprit to your sight,
While Shakespeare's radiance shone with doubled
light.

From deep oblivion snatch'd, this play appears :
It claims respect, since Shakespeare's name it bears ;
That name, the source of wonder and delight,
To a fair hearing has at least a right.
We ask no more—with you the judgment lies ;
No forgeries escape your piercing eyes !
Unbias'd then pronounce your dread decree,
Alike from prejudice and favour free.
If, the fierce ordeal pass'd, you chance to find
Rich sterling ore, tho' rude and unrefin'd,
Stamp it your own ; assert your poet's fame,
And add, fresh wreaths to Shakespeare's honour'd
name.

DRAMATIS PERSONÆ.

CONSTANTIUS	-	-	Mr. Bensley.
AURELIUS	-	-	Mr. Barrymore.
UTER	-	-	Mr. Caulfield.
VORTIGERN	-	-	Mr. Kemble.
WORTIMERUS	-	-	Mr. Whitfield.
CATAGRINUS	-	-	Mr. Trueman.
PASCENTIUS	-	-	Mr. C. Kemble.
HENGIST	-	-	Mr. Benson.
HORSUS	-	-	Mr. Phillimore.
FOOL	-	-	Mr. King.
SERVANT	-	-	Master De Camp.
PAGE	-	-	Master Gregson.
EDMUNDA	-	-	Mrs. Powell.
FLAVIA	-	-	Mrs. Jordan.
ROWENA	-	-	Miss Miller.
ATTENDANTS ON			Miss Leake.
EDMUNDA	-	-	Miss Tidswell.
			Miss Heard.

Barons, Officers, Guards, &c. &c.

VORTIGERN.

A C T I.

SCENE I.

A large Hall, discovers CONSTANTIUS, VORTIGERN,
WORTIMERUS, CATAGRINUS, PASCENTIUS,
and Attendants.

Constantius.

GOOD Vortigern! as peace doth bless our isle,
And the loud din of war no more affrights us,
And as my soul hath plac'd thee next herself,
'Tis our desire that thou deny'st us not,
That, which anon we crave thee to accept,
For though most weighty be our proffer'd task,
We trust thy goodness will not yet refuse,
For we have always found thee soft by nature,
And like the pelican, e'en with thy blood,
Ready to succour and relieve.

Vor. Most gracious sov'reign! to command is
thine,

And as a subject mine is to obey.

Con. Such was the answer we did here expect,
And farther now we shall explain our meaning;
As frozen age we find doth fast approach,
And state affairs lie heavy with ourself,
We here to thee half of our pow'r resign,
That thy reward may pace with this thy labour.
To this our proposition what reply?

B

Vor.

Vor. Oh! my most noble, good, and bounteous lord,

These honours are indeed so great, so weighty,
I fear lest like a garment too confin'd,
They awkwardly should press upon the wearer.
Therefore, my gracious lord! let one more worthy,
I do beseech thee, bear them.

Con. Nay! nay! this thy excuse will not suffice us,

E'en here, we do await thy full consent,
And, that we may more speedily conclude,
We do require of thee that thou should'st sign
These papers, by the which thou wilt become
Jointly with ourself, King of this our realm.

Vor. I shall, my lord, obey your high command.
[Signs the paper.

Con. We shall await your coming at our palace.
[Exit Constantius.

Vor. Fortune, I thank thee!
Now is the cup of my ambition full!
And by this rising tempest in my blood
I feel the fast approach of greatness which
E'en like a peasant stoops for my acceptance.
But hold! O conscience, how is it with thee?
Why dost thou pinch me thus, for should I heed
thee,

Then must my work crumble and fall to nought;
Come then thou soft, thou double fac'd deceit!
Come dearest flatt'ry! come direst murder!
Attend me quick, and prompt me to the deed!
What! jointly wear the crown? No! I will all!
And that my purpose may soon find its end,
This, my good King, must I unmannerly
Push from his seat and fill myself the chair;
Welcome then glittering mark of royalty!
And with thy pleasing yet oppressive weight,

Bind

Bind fast this firm, and this determin'd brow.
 But ere I do proceed, let caution guide me,
 For though the trunk and body of the tree
 Be thus within my gripe, still do I fear
 Those boughs which stand so near and close allied,
 Which will, ere long, yield seeds for their revenge.
 Then since my soul e'en murder must commit,
 To gratify my thirst for royalty,
 Why should I play the child, or like a niggard,
 By sparing, mar and damn my cause for ever?
 No! as the blow strikes one, all three shall fall!
 Then shall I, giant-like, and void of dread,
 Uprear my royal and encircled brow,
 And in the face of the Omnipotent
 Bid bold defiance.—
 This my determination then shall be,
 And firm as adamant the end I'll see,

S C E N E II.

A Chamber in VORTIGERN's Palace.

Enter EDMUNDA and FLAVIA.

“*Fla.* Dearest mother! why let watery grief
 “ Like a corroding and slow malady
 “ Nip thus the fairest and most beauteous pearl,
 “ That ever art of man by stealth or cunning
 “ Drew from the azure vault of brightest heav'n,
 “ To grace this earth?”—Oh! my beloved mother!
 Turn, turn those tear worn eyes, and let one smile,
 One cheering look of sweet serenity,
 Beam forth to comfort my afflicted soul!

Edm. Oh! heavens! my gentle Flavia! would
 I could!

But this corroding pensive melancholy
 Most venom-like, destroys its nourisher.

B 2

Oh!

Oh! Vortigern, my lov'd, once loving husband,
 Why rend this bursting heart with cold disdain,
 E'en the poor culprit brought before his judge
 May boldly plead his cause; but I alas!
 Most innocent, and ignorant of my fault,
 Must bear the weight of judgment.

Enter PASCENTIUS.

Fla. What news of good import, my dearest
 brother,

Does this thy eager joy now cloak from us?

Pas. Oh! I have tidings I would fain make
 known,

But they are of such wond'rous magnitude
 That I can scarcely give them utterance.

Edm. Oh! speak my child! my dear Pascen-
 tius, speak,
 For much thy mother consolation needs.

Pas. The King then, madam, in his royal
 bounty,
 Hath jointly with himself, conferr'd the sway
 Of this our mighty kingdom, on my father.

Edm. Now wee indeed hath made her master-
 piece!
 Ambition thou! thou art mine enemy;
 Thy idle dreams have forc'd my husband from me;
 Thy honey'd visions have depriv'd my soul
 Of that alone which made life worth retaining;
 Yes, thou art now, alas! become a flow'r
 That by the radiance of the sun is parch'd,
 And lacking drops of succour, droops and dies.

*Enter FOOL, whimsically attired, with his Bells
 and Ladle.*

Pas. Whither so fast, good Fool?

Fool.

Fool. Good Fool, say'st thou! marry, these are sweet words, that do not often fall to our lot; but let me tell you, good master, fools have excellent wits, and those that ha' none will gladly go flatter, lest the fool's folly should make them still more foolish.

Pas. But, prithee, tell us what is thine affair?

Fool. Oh! my affair is weighty indeed, being burthened with the speech o'royalty.

Pas. And wherefore so?

Fool. I pray you stay your patience but awhile, and I will tell you: thou dost expect nought from the Fool, but folly; but from a king thou wouldst a cunning speech.

Pas. And is't not so?

Fool. Oh! no, by my troth, our good sovereign hath unto my noble master betrayed great lack of policy.

Pas. How so?

Fool. Why your wise man will tell you, the crown doth gall the wearer; but marry! I will shew myself the fool indeed, for I do say the half oft pinches more than the whole.

Pas. Thou wouldst be witty, Fool!

Fool. Marry, say not I would be, but that I am so; for let me tell you, the wit of your Fool is true wit, being solely his own, no man coveting it; whereas that of your wise man comes from books, and from those who went before. But wherefore should I thus lose wind? my wit being folly, is not by your wise man understood; therefore, I'll to the purpose. My master is made half King, and sends me his swift Mercury, to tell your gentle ladyship his honour's pleasure.

Edm. Prithee, be brief, and tell thine errand quickly.

Fool. An please you then, my sweet mistress, he wills that you do put on your best attire, and that you do straight attend him, and go before th'other half o'th' crown.

Edm. We shall be ready at command. [*Exeunt.*]

SCENE III.

Another Apartment in VORTIGERN's Palace.

Enter VORTIGERN.

Vor. Thus far, then, have my deeds a sanction found,
 For still each morn doth the resplendant sun
 Dart forth its golden rays, to grace my sight.
 O what an inconsistent thing is man !
 'There was a time when e'en the thought of murder
 Would have congeal'd my very mass of blood ;
 " And, as a tree, on the approaching storm,
 " E'en so my very frame would shake and tremble :"
 But now I stand not at the act itself,
 Which breaks all bonds of hospitality.—
 To me, the King hath ever been most kind ;
 Yea, even lavish of his princely favours,—
 And this his love I do requite with murder !
 And wherefore this ? What ! for a diadem,
 The which I purchase at no less a cost
 Than even the perdition of my soul ;
 Still at that self same price will I obtain it.
 The rooted hate the Britons bear the Scots
 Is unto me an omen most propitious ;
 I have dispatch'd my secret emissaries,
 And the young princes sons of the old King,
 (A long time since for study sent to Rome)
 Even for them have I prepared honours :
 For ere the moon shall twice have fill'd her orb,
 Death shall provide for them a crown immortal !

Enter

Enter Servant.

Serv. Two officers, my lord ! await your leisure.

Vor. Well, shew them to our presence.

Enter Murderers.

Have ye concluded,
Is your answer ready ?

Murd. We have consider'd all,
And on your promis'd bounty undertake
A speedy execution.

Vor. You are agreed ?

Both. Yes, my good lord.

Vor. Listen then awhile !

This night Constantius gives a feast, at which
He wills I should be present, mark me well,
For I will give the signal, and retire.
Then tarry not, but do it on the instant.

Murd. Fear not, my noble lord, we are resolv'd.

[*Exeunt.*

Vor. Now then good King prepare thee for the
worst.

For ere the thick and noisome air of night
Shall with damn'd Hecate's baneful spells be fill'd,
Thou must from hence to the cold bed of death,
To whom alike peasant and king are flaves.
Come then black night, and hood the world in
darkness,

Seal close the hearts of those I have suborn'd,
That pity may not turn them from their purpose.

[*Exit.*

SCENE IV.

A Chamber in CONSTANTIUS' Palace.

Enter CONSTANTIUS with a Groom.

Con. Here place the light, now hasten to the hall,
And unto Vortigern present this ring,
Pledge of my sacred friendship, and alliance,
Tell him I fain would see him in the morning—
Farewel, good Page! I now would be alone.

[Exit Page.]

O sleep, thou nourisher of man and babe,
Soother of every sorrow, that can't bury
The care-distracted mind in sweet oblivion,
To thee, O gentle pow'r! I pawn my soul!
Here then, on my bended knee, great God,
Let me implore thy grace, and look for mercy;
" Though thou hast plac'd me sovereign over men,
" And on my brow hath fix'd a diadem;
" Yet am I subject still to human frailty,
" And naught can boast more than my meanest
vassal."

How wisely hast thou fram'd thy work of nature,
Even the smallest reptile hath its instinct,
Aye, is as nicely form'd as man, himself.
Both too must die, both rot and come to dust.
Yet man hath one great property besides,
A never fading, an immortal soul!
Upon that thought I rest my happiness.

[Lies on the couch.]

Enter two Murderers.

1st. Mur. " Oh! if one spot did fully his pure
soul

" In heaven hath he wip'd it clean away,
" With

“ With this his sweet unfeigned oraison.

2nd. *Mur.* “ ’Tis true——

“ The King to us hath ever been most kind,

“ We’ve serv’d and gained honours under him;

“ ’Twould have disgrac’d the name of Murderer

“ Had we to cold death sent him unprepar’d.

“ For e’en the rigid law itself allows

“ To crimes most daring, most atrocious,

“ A time to pray, a time to ask for mercy.

1st. *Mur.* “ Why how now?

“ Hast thou forgot thine errand,

“ Wast sent here to prate thus,

“ Or to fulfil thy promise?

“ I’ll do’t, nor this thy dagger will I sheath

“ ’Till reaking with his blood.

2nd. *Mur.* “ Yet one moment I pray thee,

“ comrade!

1st. *Mur.* “ I tell thee I will not.

“ For as I am a man and foldier,

“ So will I scorn to break my promis’d vow.

1st. *Mur.* “ Thou shalt not yet,

“ For statue like, here will I fix myself

“ Till thou dost hear me out.

“ Oh! is’t not most manlike, that we stain

“ Our hands with blood that ne’er did us offend?

“ Is’t not most serpent like, to sting sweet sleep,

“ Which even from the giant takes all strength,

“ And makes man taste of that which is to come?

“ Let us, I pray thee friend, turn from the deed!

“ I cannot, dare not, nay! I will not do’t—

2nd. *Mur.* “ Coward, take hence that poor un-

“ manly carcase,

“ Or this my steel shall work a double end.

1st. *Mur.* “ Lay on then! for I will defend the

“ King,

“ And

"And may the Gods aid this my good design."

[They fight, first Murderer dies behind the Scenes.]

The King awakes.

Con. "Vassal, I say! what means this bloody deed?"

"This bold intrusion in our royal presence?"

"Can majesty command no more respect,

"But, that our very sleep must be disturb'd

"With murder, rude and most licentious?"

Mur. "Why plainly then! I do not fear thy
"presence,

"And to be brief with thee, thine hour is come!"

King. "Traitor and villain, what would'st thou?"

Mur. "Nay then, an thou dost speak so rudely,

"Take thy reward. *[Stabs him.]*

King. "Oh! I die, sweet Heaven receive my
"soul!"

"Forgive, oh pardon this his crime!"

"I come! bliss! bliss! is my reward for ever.

[Dies.]

Mur. "Farewell, good King! and thou my
"comrade too!"

Now for my fouler purpose, that done!

Hence on time's wing will I to Vortigern,

And this my two edg'd work to him unfold.

[Exit.]

SCENE V.

*Enter VORTIGERN with Guards, as having viewed
the dead body of the King, behind the Scenes.*

Vor. O! this preposterous and inhuman act,
Doth stir up pity in the blackest hell.

Heav'n's

Heav'n's aspect did foretell some ill this night,
For each dread shrieking minister of darkness,
Did chatter forth his rude and dismal song,
While bellowing thunder shook the troubled
earth,

“ And the livid, and flaky lightning,

“ Widely burst ope each crack in Heav'n's high
“ portal.”

Have ye the traitor seiz'd? Is he yet dead?

Off. Hard by, my lord, he lies reeking in's blood,
Despair and horror mastered each man's breast;
The attempt to check their rage would have been
useless,

His body is become one gaping wound.

Vor. O! my good friends, wou'd you had spar'd
his life,

And that your zeal had been more temperate,

For by the workings of my soul, I find

This was the instrument, but not the head.

Off. Name him you deem the murderer, good
my lord?

Vor. Be silent and mark well that I shall say,

The Scots you know do bear us enmity,

Many of rank do tarry in our Court;

On them the guilt of this foul murder rests.

I pray you instantly dispatch the guard,

And seize each Scotsman ye shall chance to meet;

I will go summon all the lords to council,

And well consider that 'twere best to do.

[*Exeunt.*]

SCENE

S C E N E VI.

*Assembly of Barons.**Enter VORTIGERN.*

Vor. Oh! my thrice noble and right worthy
Peers,

We are now met upon the heaviest summons
That ever yet did occupy our thoughts;
The sparkling drop which graces every eye,
And fain wou'd deluge every manly cheek,
Denotes the brimful sorrow of each heart;
Pity disgraces not the manlike brow,
And yet it suits but ill the present crisis,
When our best strength and wisdom both are
needful,

To stem this black, this damn'd conspiracy;
For bloody war and foul rebellion lurk
Beneath the mask of cruel treachery,
Which i'th' present is so plainly shewn,
By the brutal deed of these vile Scotsmen!
Then let not drowsy thought deter our purpose,
Nor basely rot in us the plant of justice,
The clamorous people call aloud for sentence,
Should we delay, it will go hard with us.

1st. Bar. Trusting to thee, our noble good Pro-
tector,

We do, without delay, pronounce as guilty,
The perpetrators of this crying deed.
We also do, with general accord,
Beseech you bear the office of a King,
Until the Princes do return from Rome;
For on Aurelius, now the elder son

Of

Of our deceased King the election lights;
 Well do we know how tedious is this task,
 How full of trouble and perplexity!
 But we do also know thee for a man,
 Most good, most perfect, and most merciful!

Vor. I fear good Barons you do flatter me!
 I thought ere this, to have resigned the weight,
 Which the late King had heap'd upon my shoulders;

But mark the sad reverse, for even now,
 You double this my load, and bear me down;
 Oh! you ha' struck me where I am indeed
 Most vulnerable—" *The voice o'th' people!*"
 For them I will surrender liberty.

Dispatch to Rome the messengers I pray,
 And let Aurelius know, that he is called
 To wear this gold, this forked diadem,
 That gives to man the sway of sovereignty.

2nd. Bar. My lord! the people, Barons, all do
 thank you

For this your kind compliance with their will;
 To morrow's dawn shall see the packets ready,
 And we will then consult what messengers
 Shall to the princes bear, these heavy tidings.

Vor. 'Tis well! I do commend your zealous care;
 And now, good friends, one mournful charge
 remains,

To attend the burial of our murdered King;
 Oh! 'twas a nipping blast, which suddenly
 Bereft us of our first, our sweetest plant,
 Both King and Father it hath stolen from us;

"But wherefore do I strive to ope anew,
 "Those gates which bar the course of liquid sorrow?
 "No! rather let your big griefs pine unseen,
 "Where cold restraint can neither chide nor curb
 ye,"

Farewel! time then be yours until to-morrow.

[*Exeunt.*

SCENE VII.

*A Hall in VORTIGERN's Palace.**Enter VORTIGERN.*

Vor. How stands it now—then am I but Protector?

Oh! 'tis an attribute my soul abhors,
To sovereignty a pander and a slave,
That looks with wistful eyes upon the crown,
And dares not touch it; O! I will none on't.
Curse on those lords that did award me this,
Whose justice needs must force them keep the
crown

For those, who by descent, do most deserve it.
By heav'ns, I'll pour my bitter vengeance down
For this their slow and niggardly promotion.
Yet as they did award and give me sway
Until the Prince Aurelius should return,
Then is it mine most sure! the Princes cannot
From their cold graves return to take it from me!
Their wish'd-for death is sure, yet do I dread—
For here within, there lurks a messenger
That cautions me, and fain wou'd ha' me fear.
What ho! without I say! who attends there!

Enter Servant.

Vor. Are there no letters yet arrived from Rome?

Serv. No, my good liege.

Vor. Nor messengers?

Serv. Neither, my gracious sir.

Vor. Retire a while.

[Exit Servant.]

Nor messengers nor letters! this alarms me;
But what care I, e'en let the Princes come,
When

When come, there's room enough i'th' ground
for them.

But soft! and let me weigh my present state,
For much I fear these barons proffer'd friendship.

" Their niggard shew of liberality

" Suits ill my lofty aim, and but the semblance
wears

" Of that my soul is thirsting for—Dominion!

" Not rivetted by closer ties their Chief, tho'
friendly,

" May swerve and prove a foe."—

Yet I've a lure that shall ensnare that chief,
My daughter's hand! but if she shou'd refuse,
Then were my purpose baffled, or destroy'd.

Is it not strange, a flinty heart like mine,
Should stagger thus at thinking of a daughter?

Flavia! whose fondest love to young Aurelius,
Now sojourning at Rome, hath long been pledg'd!
Yet what of that! shall she, a whining girl,
Oppose a father's and a monarch's will?

My firm resolve once known, will shake that mind
Which in her gentlest moments nature fram'd;
This work atchiev'd each lord his aid shall lend,
And to my will the haughtiest crest shall bend.

[Exit.

SCENE VIII.

London. The Palace.

Enter FLAVIA and PASCENTIUS.

Fla. Oh! heav'ns! in thy great mercy thou hast
led me

To that dear object I so long have sought
Through ev'ry secret winding o'th' palace.

Pas. My Flavia say!

What

What is't hath ruffled thus thy gentle bosom?
 I fear our father hath occasion'd this,
 For late as passing through the hall I saw him,
 He paced to and fro in great disorder,
 Sometimes in deep thought lost, he'd stop and
 pause,

Then o'er his troubled breast crossing his arms,
 Would utter words, but in a voice so low,
 That they distill'd themselves i'th' gentle air.
 Tho' I did thrice address him, yet he brake
 Abruptly from me, and no answer made.
 I never saw the conflict of his soul
 So plainly in his countenance pourtray'd.

Fla. Alas! 'tis true! I too have seen my father;
 And harshly has he urg'd my breach of vow
 To my Aurelius, and to pledge my love
 To one my soul abhors! say then, my brother,
 Is that kind friendship for my lov'd Aurelius,
 Which first in years of infancy took root,
 Is it yet untainted? Speak truly brother—
 And are thy vows of friendship to thy sister
 Pure and unspotted as the face of heav'n!
 And wilt thou save her?

Paf. 'Tis not in my nature
 To act a treach'rous or ungenerous part!

Fla. Enough, enough, I meant not to offend;
 That I'm about to ask is truly urgent,
 Nor more nor less than our own banishment.

Paf. Th' impending exile is to me most strange,
 But if thy dearest mother thou can't leave,
 Then must it be most pressing; I consent,
 And will not ruffle thee by further question.
 But silence for a while, here comes the Fool,
 Of him some tidings we perchance may hear.

Enter

Enter Fool.

Fla. Speak, Fool, when did'st last see my gentle mother?

Fool. Rather ask, when 'twas that I e'er saw thy father in such sort before; marry, he did never speak so roundly to me. Of old, your Fool did make your sage one tremble, but my foolship hath not found it so. Times must indeed be bad, when fools lack wit to battle wise mens ire; nay, but I have legs, therefore can run; a heart, that's merry, but wou'd be more so, an 'twas drench'd with sack from my ladle; but no matter, that's empty, till you gentles chuse to fill it, then by your leaves we'll walk, and carry our wits where they'll chance meet better fare.

Paf. Nay, nay, come hither Fool, be not too hasty;

This fellow's true and honest, and, dear sister,
Might well our purpose serve, wilt thou consent
That in our service he be bound?

Fla. Of me ask nothing, but pursue that council

Which in thy riper wisdom shall seem meet.

Paf. What's thy purpose, Fool?

Fool. To quit thy father.

Paf. What think'st o'me for a master?

Fool. Nay, o'that I think not, for thou wou'dst joke, but an thou dost, thou hast rare impudence to do't i'th' presence of a fool.

When thy beard is somewhat blacker,
When thy years have made thee riper,
When in thy purse the pounds thou'lt tell,
And for a brothel thou'lt not sell
Thy patrimony, and thy lands,

C

Why

Why marry, an I should then find nought more
suiting, my charity shall bid me follow thee, and
teach thee the ways o'this slippery world.

Fla. O tarry not, for we must hence away ;
What hour is it ?

Pas. Near five o'th' clock.
Yon brilliant mass o'fire the golden sun,
Hath just saluted with a blushing kiss,
That partner of his bed the vasty sea.

Fool. Yea, and your father wills that you do soon
salute your beds, for he hath order'd that supper
be instantly brought into the hall.

Fla. Good heav'n's ! so soon, O my Pascentius,
Each moment lost is an eternity. [*Exeunt.*

Fool. Nay, then ye are gone and ha left your
poor Fool behind. Methinks I love that young
master ; nay, I know not how 'tis, but my legs
wou'd needs go follow him ; yet master Fool, is
this wisdom ? for they say the legs should ne'er
carry away the brains ; yet let me see, cannot I,
in my folly, now form this saying, and turn it to
mine own conceit ? I ha hit it ; for it matters
not what comes o'my brains, for men say they are
good for naught, but my legs are ; therefore, let
the better o'th' two serve as guide for the other.
I'll away then, and follow him. [*Exit.*

END OF THE FIRST ACT.

A C T II.

S C E N E I.

*Rome.**Enter AURELIUS and UTER, CONSTANTIUS' two Brothers.**Uter.* E'EN now in Rome have we for seven long yearsMade this our wearisome and constant sojourn,
I would we were again in Britain.*Aur.* Even so good Uter stands it with myself,
Nay, an thou yearn'st to see thy native land,
How is it then with me that there have left
The jewel of my soul, my dearest Flavia!*Uter.* Nay, good my brother, patience yet a little,

All will be well, Flavia doth love you still.

Aur. I cannot, will not bear this absence longer.*Enter Servant.**Serv.* A messenger, my lords, attends without
On business of great import.*Aur.* Whence comes he?*Serv.* From Britain.*Aur.* From Britain say'st thou! then admit
him straight. [Exit Serv.]*Enter Messenger.**Mes.* My gracious lord, are you the eldest son
Of our good King Constantius?*Aur.* Even so.

C 2

Mes.

Mef. This packet then, I fear, will news contain
The most afflicting.

AURELIUS reads.

These letters we in haste dispatch'd to tell you,
Of your dear father's death, and to forewarn you
Of your own danger—Murder most foul hath
ta'en him.

Vortigern on the Scots hath laid the murder;
But under this pretence much lies conceal'd.
Till you arrive, he is to rule deputed:
But as you prize your lives return not yet.

Aur. Oh! horror! horror! my dear father
murder'd!

Uter. By whom? speak, Messenger, where, when,
and how?

Mef. The plot, good Princes, hath been deeply
laid.

Aur. This is indeed most foul! say on, my
friend,

Speak quickly, I intreat thee!

Mef. Then thus 'tis—Vortigern hath done the
deed;

His love of splendour, pomp and sovereignty,
And his great int'rest in the people's minds,
All, all did prompt him to this hellish act.

Aur. Uter, oh heavens! the father of my Flavia!
It is impossible! It cannot be!

Uter. Oh! this indeed is damned treachery.
My dear Aurelius, let not stupor choak
The worthy feeling of a just revenge;
Courage, Aurelius! courage, my dear brother!

Aur. Speak on, speak on, and end thy sad dis-
course!

Mef. Thy friends in Britain long suspected this,
And to each port did send their trusty spies,

To

To learn what vessels there for Rome were bound,
And haply that which did transport me here,
Was to have brought your executioners.

Aur. Oh! would it had been so. Uter support me!

Uter. Let us retire a while my gentle brother,
Hereafter we will send and question *thee*
On these thy tidings, and their direful cause.

[*Exeunt.*]

SCENE II.

Rome.

Enter AURELIUS, UTER, and Messenger.

Aur. Our friends in England then have thought
it fitting,

That on receipt o'these, your woeful letters,
We should with all speed hie us into Scotland?

Mes. E'en so did they instruct for weighty
reasons.

“ Know, Vortigern did alway hate the Scots,
“ And hath oft times during your father's reign,
“ Fram'd laws, most burthenfome unto that people,
“ But the keen tooth of hatred and revenge,
“ With double fury now will shew itself;
“ For every noble Scot then found in London,
“ Hath suffer'd under this fell tiger's fangs,
“ And this to direst rage, hath stirr'd their blood.”

Your story told, will raise you aid of thousands,
Three years of plenty have, among the Britons,
Sown seeds of luxury and baneful riot,
Therefore, they're unprepar'd, nor think of war.

Uter. Are vessels ready to convey us thither?

Mes. Yes, my good lord.

Aur. Come, brother, let's away then with all
speed —

But wer't not better that we change these habits?

Mef. No! no, your Roman vestments will disguise you,

And may in Scotland greatly aid your cause.

Aur. Then be it so—farewell to thee, O! Rome;
I ne'er did think that upon quitting thee,
My brimful heart wou'd thus run o'er with sorrow.
[*Exeunt.*]

SCENE III.

*A Hall, discovers VORTIGERN, EDMUNDA,
WORTIMER, &c. at Supper.*

Vor. Seek, Wortimer, thy brother and thy sister:

Tell them it suits but ill their present years,
To tarry thus, when summon'd to our presence.

Wort. My gracious father, I obey.

Edm. O! dearest husband, calm thy ruffled soul,
They mean not to offend your grace; perchance
They know not of your wish for their attendance.

Vor. Peace then, and with thy words, whet not
I pray

That wrath, which kindles fore within my breast!
Again, dost hear me, bid thy tongue be silent,
'Twere better else thou did'st retire.

Edm. I go, and though a vulture gnaw my
heart,
I'd bear it all with meekness and with patience,
Rather than this my voice shou'd e'er offend thee.

[*Exit.*]

Wort. My gracious Sir, I've search'd the chambers through,
And call'd aloud, but answer had I none,
Save but my own words, return'd upon mine ear,
In airy sound.

Vor.

Vor. What ! scorn'd and thus defied, I will not
bear it,
Send for my prating wife, and thou'd I find
That she in any wise did aid their flight,
Let her beware of my revenge.—What ho !

Enter Servant.

Vor. Quick to my wife, and say I'd speak with
her.
As yet from those dull sluggards sent to Rome,
No tidings have I heard. But here she comes.

Enter EDMUNDA.

Edm. What is your pleasure, Sir ?

Vor. Where are my recreant son and daughter
gone ;

Nay, think not with those eye drops to deceive
me,

Tell me I say, thou know'st full well their flight !

Edm. If in these veins doth run the blood of
life,

Or there be truth on earth, I know not of them.

Vor. Deceive me not I say, thou speak'st most
false,

I know the quality of women's eyes,

That in a breath can weep, can laugh, or frown,

Say not these waters flow for loss o' them ;

I know thee well, thou hast conspir'd with them ;

'Twere better thou mak'st known their hiding
place.

Edm. O ! Sir, these tears do stop my pow'r
o'speech,

Which wou'd again vouch that I uttered.

Vor. It is most false, but look to't, and doſt hear me,

Come not athwart me and my purpoſes,
Leſt thou ſhould'ſt add to that fierce hate I bear
thee. [*Exit Vor.*]

Edm. And can this be? theſe ears were ſure
deceiv'd,

Yet I ſleep not, nor is my brain diſtemper'd,
It was not ſo, he ſaid not he did hate me;
O! heav'ns, in your great mercy aid me now,
And if your pleaſure be not to torment
Man's poor exiſtence in this ſpan of life,
Aid me to bear my weight o'miſeries!
Oh! yet again! my ſon and daughter gone,
And tell not me the cauſe o'this their flight.
My brain grows hot, I can no longer bear it;
Forbid his preſence too! O! I am diſtracted!
And ſleep will quiet me, I'll to the poppy
And with its juices drench theſe feverous lips!
O! I ha' need of med'cine and of comfort;
Again my wits do wander, I'll retire,
And leſt the bleak winds battle with my head,
I'll to my couch and lay me on its pillow.

[*Exit.*]

SCENE IV.

A Wood.

*Enter PASCENTIUS, FLAVIA diſguiſed, and
FOOL.*

Paf. Speak, deareſt ſiſter, ſay, how fares it with
thee?

For

For those soft limbs were form'd for gentler usage,
But cheer thee up, my Flavia, whilst I'm with
thee,

Thou must not faint, if there be comfort near
I'll seek it, and from out the tiger's jaw
I'll tear thee food, or if the thirsty lion
Should stand betwixt me and the bubbling brook,
This arm shou'd find a passage to his heart.
But an thou need'st nor food, nor element,
Then will I sit and comfort thy sweet tears,
And as the smaller stream doth oft times mingle,
And add its nothingness to the vast sea,
So on thy streaming cheek will I let fall
One pitying tear, one tender drop of sorrow.

Fla. Oh! gentle, excellent, most loving brother,

It is my aching heart which thus o'ercomes me,
Wretch that I am! what hath my mother done,
That lacking pity I could leave her thus,
How can her drooping heart bear this sad shock?
Can her meek soul my father's rage encounter;
No, no, impossible! then am I wretched.
Then O! you righteous and all powerful Judge,
If breath of man, with pure soul offer'd up,
Can touch you, or obtain your gentle hearing,
Behold a maiden for a mother begs,
And on her bended knee sue for protection.
Let some kind angel, minister of mercy,
Pour on her wounded soul the balm of comfort,
And in the place of overwhelming sorrow,
Let the dear plant of smiling joy bud forth;
And shou'd she weep, then may her dewy tears
Be those of tender peace and charity.

Fool. By my troth, mine eyes did never water
so before, sweet mistress, an thou hast charm'd
thy Fool, methinks the choir o'angels needs must
listen

listen to thy pray'r; and yet these underprops
o'mine do sorely ach, and wherefore shou'd they?
for an I do eat, then am I loaded, and do bear it
well, but now that I am empty, these porters
won't carry me, this is strange, and needs more
wisdom to unveil, than lies in my poor foolish
brain.

Fla. Methinks I'd sit and rest me here a-while.

Paf. Then to the shade of yon imperial oak
I'll lead thee, there thou calmly may'st repose;
Our honest knave here, he shall sing the while,
And sooth thy sad and secret melancholy.

Fool. Why, to be brief good master, I needs
wou'd sing, but that gentle lady hath crack'd the
strings o'my voice; an 'twill please you weep,
marry I'll take the loudest pipe, and shou'd I fail
in giving entertainment, why then I'll to Paul's,
and there i'the presence of Bonner, be whipp'd for
a slanderer.

Paf. I pray thee Fool do as I list.

Fool. Now then I'll pipe, but by my troth you
seem sad, and needs will me to sing merrily; well,
an folly will please you, I'll to't straight.

Fool sings.

A Fool must needs be merry,
Lack, lack, and a well a day,
And in his shoes must bury
His sorrow and all his care;
Then is not the Fool's lot hard,
Is not his mind sore treated,
Do not his friends of's poor brains
Make phyfic for their senses?
Then lack, lack and well a day.

But

But in this our world 'tis true,
Lack, lack and well a day,
We our old friends change for new,
When they no longer suit us;
Then heigh-ho poor dobbins all,
Be sharp with men I pray you,
They carry fool's minds indeed,
Yet are but knaves I tell you.

Then lack, lack, ah! well a day.

Fla. Good honest Fool, I do sincerely thank thee.

Fool. Nay, nay, say not so, an I had flatter'd, why then perchance I had merited this, but i'faith gentle lady, he that says nought, save the bare truth, doth oft times meet but a bare compliment. But an you do flatter, methinks the compliment will favour more of untruth, than did the flattery, but thus it goes with our slippery world.

Pas. Who is it comes this way?

Fla. Let us retire,

Perchance it may be one of our pursuers.

Fool. An thou'lt listen a while to me I'll tell thee thou need'st not fear, 'tis but the Post on's way to your father's palace.

Enter Post.

Pas. Friend, thou out runnest almost speed itself;
Whither art bound?

Post. I am for London, Sir.

Pas. Nay stop one moment, I conjure thee stop!
Say what these tidings that demand such haste?

Post. That which my packets do contain.

Pas. An thou will tell me their contents, there's gold.

Fool.

Fool. Now, i'troth, thou'lt unlock letters, packets, and all, look, look, the knave doth handle it with good grace, firrah an thou play'dst on David's harp, thy fingers ne'er wou'd move so glibly o'er the strings, as o'er yon gold, do'st hear me.

Post. Thy gold indeed doth please, it fills my purse,
And though it should not, yet what matters it?
I am well fee'd for telling that alone,
Which every simple peasant soon must know,
Then thus it is; Vortigern is accus'd
Of the base murder of Constantius!

Fla. Heavens!

Post. Yea, and even now the Princes marching
hither
From Scotland, with them bring a numerous
army.

Paf. Alas my father! yet I do beseech thee,
How know they this? Who was't instructed
them?

Post. Swift messengers dispatch'd by friends to
Rome,
Further I know not—therefore must away

[*Exit Post.*]

Fool. Go to, go to, I do believe thee; marry
an thou art humble, thy purse is somewhat proud-
er. Good Sir, wer't not best we put on, I am
faint at heart; marry 'tis pity my wits did not fill
their owner, as well as those who do beg them.

Paf. Let's on, and yet what course is't fit we
take?

The night doth throw his sooty mantle round,
And robs us of the cheering light of day.

Fla. Oh! Wou'd this night cou'd pluck my
sorrow from me,

Or

Or that the long eternal sleep of death
Wou'd close life's wretched, weary pilgrimage.

Pas. Oh! Sister an thou lov'st me grieve not so.

Fla. If charity be meek, so will I be,
And where thou lead'st, resign'd I'll follow thee.

Fool. Marry, an you'll listen to a fool, perchance
he may for once speak wisely.

Pas. Out with thy council then.

Fool. Thus it is—chance hath made me your
fool, and chance will now that your fool speak
something like wisdom; marry is not this the
road to Scotland? Do'st understand me?

Pas. Truly, I understand thee.

Fool. To't again, what say'st thou o'joining the
young Princes on their march?

Pas. It is most wisely utter'd, my good Fool.
Come gentle sister, we'll to th'skirt o'th' wood,
And find some cottage that may serve to night,
As 'twere a palace—all will yet be well.

[*Exeunt.*

END OF THE SECOND ACT.

A C T III.

SCENE I.

An Assembly of Barons.

Vor. **T**O you have been explained our late
dispatches,

Say, did we not invite these Princes home,
And tender them the crown? Yet we do find
They come with foreign aid and civil war,
To bear the sway and empire over us:
Can any present say why this shou'd be?

1st. Bar. No! they're the sons of our late King,
'tis true,

As such, the elder doth by right inherit
The crown and kingdom, and in their defence,
Our lives, yea, and our very best heart's blood
Were truly offer'd, which we now revoke.
And since they tear the bowels of our land,
And come with blood and naked sword to court us,
We'll to the field, and when bright victory
Hath with the sacred laurel bound our brows,
The Princes' heads in triumph shall be borne
Throughout our ranks; rebellion's just reward!

2nd. Bar. Then are they traitors to their God
and country.

3d. Bar. And as the crown is now untenanted,
'Tis fit the most deserving brow shou'd wear it.

1st. Bar. If any one there be that doth deserve it,
'Tis he that hath it even now in trust.

All. Then be it his!

1st. Bar.

1st. Bar. Girt tight the drum, and sound yon
brazen trumpet,

Let it proclaim aloud, our firm decree :
Aurelius and his brother both are traitors,
And 'gainst their mother country do rebel.

[Trumpet sounds.

2nd. Bar. Nay, stop not there; but let them
bellow on,
'Till with their clamorous noise they shame the
thunder,

And o'er the earth, and e'en to heaven proclaim,
Vortigern our King! our lawful sov'reign.

Vor. The exigencies of the state demand
My quick consent, I therefore give it you.
And when the crown shall on my front be bound,
My faithful soul shall prize the sacred trust,
My arm be nerv'd to fight in its defence.

Barons. All hail great Vortigern of Britain King!

[Trumpet sounds.

Vor. My lords, vain compliment would suit
but ill

The present time, I therefore briefly thank you :
But ere we part I fain would crave your hearing.
Our troops have now been long disus'd to war,
Yet do not think I mean their fame to tarnish,
Or on a Briton throw the damned slur
Of shameful cowardice, no, my good lords !
But though their ribs do serve as castle walls,
And fast imprison their strong lion hearts,
Yet e'en the lion, when full gorg'd with food,
Will bask, and tamely lay him down to sleep ;
Then in such sort, hath undisturbed peace,
And want of custom, (nature's substitute,
That changes e'en our very properties)
Softened their manhood. Then 'twere policy
That we should court the Saxons to our aid.

This

This too will in our Britons raise the flame
Of bright and generous emulation.

Say, lords! doth this my proposition please you?

1st. Bar. We do approve, and thank its noble
author.

Vor. You, my good lord, then do I here de-
pute,

Jointly with Catagrine our second born,
That you with speed repair to Saxony;
Our eldest shall at home command the Britons,
Time needs your haste, therefore use no delay,
Your country calls, so look you quick obey.

[*Exeunt.*]

S C E N E II.

A distant View of the Sea.

*Enter AURELIUS and UTER, (with the Scottish
army) as just disembarked, habited as Britons.*

Aur. O dearest soil, blest mother earth, hail to
thee!

Fain wou'd my feet play wanton on thy breast,
And skip with joy to tread thee once again.
'Tis not to wound thee that I thus do come
In glitt'ring steel and dire array of war,
But as my right to claim thee for mine own.

Uter. Brother, each lip for thee sends forth a
blessing;

And with the smile that buds on ev'ry face,
Alike expands a ray of happiness.
Never did I before blame nature's work,
But now I fain wou'd quarrel with her hefts,
For that in me, she caus'd a lack of years;

Else

Else had these prayers, these blessings all been mine!

To have a crown and kingdom at command
Is but as dross; but thus to have them come,
Might from their airy beds the angels draw
To taste the joys of this our mortal earth.
Throughout the camp now all is hush'd in silence,
And Morpheus, with his leaden wings outspread,
Hath on each eyelid laid the weight of slumber.

[*Exit Uter.*]

Aur. Then, as the general, the task is mine
To thank that mighty God whose name alone
Doth carry awe, and strikes the soul with fear.
Here prostrate then I fall before thy face,
And, tho' unworthy of thy mercy, pray;—
If giant form doth more enlarge the mind,
Would that my front did with the mountains vie;
That so my heat amazed brain might work
Thoughts suiting more this vast immensity!
O most expanded, O most fertile mind!
When thou would'st copulate with thoughts like
this,

Thou art mere nothingness; or when the lips
Do pour forth boisterous and high sounding words,
They back again to the poor mortal brain,
And scoff at thy presumption.

“ O God! why shou'd I, a mere speck on earth,
“ Tear thousands from their wives, children, and
“ homes!

“ O! wherefore from this transitory sleep,
“ That now doth steal from them their inward
“ cares,

“ Should I send thousands to cold dreary death?

“ 'Tis true, I am a King, and what of that?

“ Is not life dear to them, as 'tis to me?

D

“ O!

" O! peasant, envy not the prince's lot ;
 " Thy page in life's great book is not foul charg'd,
 " And like to ours besmear'd with dying breaths.
 " O! had I lives myself enough to answer
 " The ravenous and greedy jaws of death,
 " That will on these my friends, my soldiers,
 " Such havoc make, and wanton gluttony!
 " Father of mercy, great God, spare this blood!
 " And if I must alone receive the crown,
 " Bedeck'd with purple gore, I here resign it."
[Exit.

S C E N E III.

Gates of London.

*Enter CATAGRINUS, HENGIST and HORSUS, with
Saxon Troops, in grand Procession.*

Cata. Here let us halt, and let the trumpet
found,

[Trumpet sounds, Officer appears on the walls.

Off. Say, be ye friends or foes?

Cata. My father sent us hence to Saxony ;
Go, say our embassy is now fulfill'd ;

[Trumpet sounds.

Yet soft, that found proclaims his quick approach.

Heng. Throughout the ranks let each man be
prepar'd,
To hail our new ally, King Vortigern.

S C E N E

S C E N E IV.

Gates open.

VORTIGERN *appears in Robes of Majesty, followed by the Barons and British Troops.*

CATAGRINUS *kneels to VORTIGERN.*

Vor. Rise, my dear son! thou'rt welcome here again.

And you, brave Saxons, greet we to our land.

Heng. We come, great sir, to fight in thy defence,

And from thy kingdom wipe away rebellion.

Vor. Give me thy hand, brave General, and with it,

Exchange we mutually a soldier's faith.

Here let our British troops in friendship join,

And with the Saxons share our present joy.

[*Exeunt.*]

S C E N E V.

The Country.

Enter FLAVIA, PASCENTIUS, and FOOL.

Pas. Why sister thus shou'd grief usurp thy cheek?

O mingle not so much of lily die

With thy sweet rosy blood, thou'rt cold as death,

Pine not in silence thus!

Fla. I'll sit me down and court sweet music's aid.

She sings.

She sang while from her eye ran down
The silvery drop of sorrow,
From grief she stole away the crown,
Sweet patience too did borrow.
Pensive she sat while fortune frown'd,
And smiling woo'd sad melancholy.

II.

Keen anguish fain wou'd turn her heart,
And sour her gentle mind ;
But charity still kept her part,
And meekness to her soul did bind.
She bow'd content,
Heav'd forth one sigh,
Sang, wept, then turn'd to melancholy.

III.

Careless her locks around her hung,
And strove to catch each dewy tear,
The plaintive bird in pity sung,
And breath'd his sorrow in her ear.
Amaz'd she look'd,
And thank'd his care,
Then sunk once more to melancholy.

Paſ. O! why sing thus? thou doſt join woe
to woe,
Thy grief methinks demands more cheering notes.
Fla. Oh! brother, this ſtrange frame that keeps
in life,
Is almoſt ſick and weary of its tenant.

Tho'

Tho' short hath been its course, yet fickle fortune

Hath with it wanton made, and blown it
To and fro, a toy for this merc'less world.

Pas. Listen, I pray thee now, to reason's voice;
Were it not strange, if thou alone shou'd'st 'scape
The numerous ills and buffets of the world?

Fool. I'troth, thou hast wisely spoken.

Pas. Dost think so, my good Fool?

Fool. Marry, aye, do I; an I'll tell thee why,
thy speech hath not wearied the Fool, therefore
'tis a wise speech.

Pas. Thou'rt then a judge?

Fool. Aye, and a righteous one too, dost mark
me, 'tis your Fool alone will make a true report.

Pas. I understand thee not.

Fool. The more's the pity. He that doth, or
well speak, or write, will be prais'd by fools
only, for look ye, envy doth sting those that have
knowledge, and makes them fear lest their wise
heads should be outwitted, therefore again, 'tis
your Fool alone that is your upright judge, cause
forsooth, his brains are not in plenty; but those
which he hath are at's own disposal.

Pas. This road methinks shou'd lead us on our
way

To the Prince's camp! Fool, go you on before.

[*As they retire, enter Captain and Soldiers.*]

Capt. Not quite so fast, good master, prithee
halt.

Fla. What, guards! O brother, now we are
undone.

Pas. Be calm, be calm, the troops are not my
father's.

Will't please you, sir, inform us whence ye came?

Capt. From Scotland, sir.

Fla. Then O good heav'ns protect me!

Paf. And who is your commander?

Capt. One whose merit

Outweighs whatever yet did breathe on earth;
If ye be Britons, as your looks bespeak,
Then shew your wonted quality of justice;
Did ye not 'fore the awful face of Heaven,
Proclaim Constantius as your lawful King,
When on his head was pour'd the sacred oil?

Paf. But he is now no more.

Capt. Yet hath he two sons living,
Whose souls, for purity, I can compare
Unto this bright unspotted canopy.

Paf. Are ye bound towards the camp?

Capt. We are, and if you're upright men and
true,

Thither you'll follow, and there wield the sword
For justice, truth, and your anointed King.
Yet in this hallow'd cause we wou'd not force
you,

But lead into the fold with gentleness,
Each sheep that may unknowingly have strayed,
And broke from out its bounds, and flowery pas-
ture.

Paf. Proceed then, and we'll follow; tell me,
sister,

Doth not your heart beat high?

Fla. Yea, it swells so, this little breast in truth,
Can scarce contain it. ———

How shall we bear the meeting?

Fool. I troth, merrily, merrily as I do; 'tis true
I am a Briton, but then am I not a Fool? And
ne'er will I put my folly to the test. Think'st
thou I'll risk my brains for mine anointed King?
Nay,

Nay, nay, in this affair mine heels shall be my guide, and quick teach me the way to run.

[*Exeunt.*]

S C E N E VI.

A Chamber in the Palace.

Enter EDMUNDA, and Attendants.

Edm. I will not to my chamber then I tell ye.

1st. Maid. Beseech you madam to return again, For so did your physician order—

Edm. Come hither pretty maid, look at me well;

Now say, hath he so order'd it, or not?

1st. Maid. Indeed he hath.

Edm. Nay, get thee gone,—a maid, and still so false!

Go to, live I not yet? Am I then call'd?

And hath my sweet-heart death yet fondly clasp'd me;

Say! hath the heavy passing bell yet founded, And hail'd me to my snug and chilly chamber?

2nd. Maid. Madam, I fear your reason wanders.

Edm. Aye, aye! I understand thee, it is flown; My poor brain, alas! is sore distemper'd.

[*Strikes her forehead.*]

Sweet, sweet, come from yon branch here's food for thee,

My pretty birds come back, I will not harm ye, My bosom as your little nest is warm,

And is as soft. aye, and full of comfort too.
Nay stop! it is too warm, come not! 'twill burn
ye.

2nd. Maid. My tears do flow for her so plente-
ously,
That I have left in me no power to help her.

Edm. O! you great Gods! why pelt ye thus
my brain,
And with your thunders loud, cause such dire out-
rage

Within this little ball, this, O! this nothing!
Tell me high Heaven, is this your justice?
Did I not nourish them, aye, teach them, love
them?

Yes, little drops, Oh! come, cool my poor face;
Speak! aye, ye come I know to say I did.
Now, please your highness, and what wou'd you
more?

Say, are not here a host of witnesses?
Longer, O let me not detain the Court,
For in such plenty they do now rush forth,
That you, Sir, you who fill yon seat of justice,
Must throw away your gown and swim for life.

1st. Maid. Will't please we lead you in?

Edm. I gin indeed to think I do need support,
For I am even weaker than a babe.
Hush! hush! come hither both, I'll tell ye some-
thing;

Now then your ears, I'm mad, ha! ha! ha!
Say! is not this Whitsuntide?

2nd. Maid. Aye an't please you madam.

Edm. Then listen.

She sings

Last Whitsunday they brought me
 Roses, and lilies fair,
 Violets too they gave me
 To bind my auburn hair;
 But then my face look'd smiling,
 Cause that my babes were near,
 Now yon stinging nettle bring,
 'Twill better suit this tear.

How like you this?

1st. Maid. Excellently well, madam.

Edm. The time has been! when thus thou might'st
 have said,

What, must these poor eyes never see them
 more?

And have I need of these vile rags; off! off!
 I'll follow thee to th'extreme point o'th' world,
 And naked bear the icy mountains cold,
 And the dread scorches o'that ball of fire
 'Till I have found them i'the antipodes;
 Shou'd I not meet them there, I will rail so!——
 Pardon these starts! in troth I will not harm ye,
 Indeed, indeed, I'm wrong'd! most sadly wrong'd!
 Did these sweet notes then charm ye? then I'll
 die,

For look you, I will then sing sweeter far,
 Than dying swan at ninety and nine years!
 Lack, lack, a day! I'm faint! your arm sweet
 maid.

There is my gage, farewell; good night, sweet!
 good night!—— [Exeunt.

END OF THE THIRD ACT.

A C T IV.

SCENE I.

AURELIUS' Camp.

Enter AURELIUS, UTER, PASCENTIUS, *and*
FLAVIA.

Aur. YOU then escaped disguised in man's
attire?

Fla. 'Tis true I did, but ne'er did rapier yet
Adorn a side less fitting to support it.

Aur. To you Pascentius my best thanks are
due.

Pas. Nay, nay, 'tis little that to me you owe.

Fla. Indeed, but for his aid, I long ere this
Had broke my sacred vow, and wedded death.

Uter. Brother, the enemy is near at hand,
Straight let us forth, and range our troops for
battle.

Aur. Go you before and swift I'll follow.
Now to thy care my dearest friend, I trust
Thy beauteous sister, and my sweetest love.
Should victory proclaim the day our own,
All will be well; but shou'd the loss be ours,
To Heav'n's just guard I must resign you both.
Two trusty servants have I placed without,
Who will conduct you westward of our camp,

If

If we be beaten, thither we'll tetreat:
Haste! fare thee well, sweet love.

Fla. This token let me brace around thine
arm,
Think of me in the field, nor let revenge
Blot from thy gen'rous breast the sense of pity.

Aur. O! cruel fortune, so soon to wrench from
me
This lovely form, to steal this beauteous hand,
And offer to my grasp this weighty steel.
[*Exeunt.*

S C E N E II.

The Camp of HENGIST.

Enter HENGIST and HORSUS.

Heng. Have Vortigern's brave sons yet ta'en
their station?

Hor. Yea, to our right the Briton's strength is
form'd.

Heng. Then bid them wait the enemies attack.
[*Exit Hor.*

Now, O ye Gods! prove but propitious to me,
And yield me but the victory this day:
A mightier force I've summon'd to this island,
And with them my fair daughter will arrive;
If then her beauty catch this vicious King,
E'en as mine own I'll hail this fertile land,
And these brave Britons by my arts and arms,
Bind to a foreign yoke. [Exit.

SCENE

SCENE III.

A Wood.

Enter Britons and Saxons, they encounter the Scots, and after a hard contest, the Scots are defeated.

Enter AURELIUS and UTER.

Aur. O brother! fortune frowns, the day is lost.

Uter. But it hath cost them dear!
Rally then our troops, and march them towards the West. [*Exeunt.*

SCENE IV.

Another Part of the Field.

Enter FLAVIA and PASCENTIUS.

Pas. Be of good cheer, tho' they have lost the day,
Yet was the victory most dearly bought,
The Scots too in good order have retir'd.

Enter HORSUS.

Say, what's thy business in this bloody field,
And who's that maid who bears thee company?
It

It should seem that thou hast fought and conquer'd,

And hast in triumph seiz'd on this fair prize.

Pas. I, Sir, am her protector.

Hor. If thou'lt resign her, here is gold for thee.

Pas. Although my peasant habit shews me poor,

Yet covers it a soul that boldly scorns thee ;

I am a Briton, Sir, will that suffice thee ?

Hor. Vile stripling ! dost thou know me ?

Pas. I do not.

Hor. Thou shalt repent this !

Pas. Approach her not, if yet thou lov'st thyself.

Hor. Thy lack of years doth save thee from my wrath,

Thou beardless boy who thus doth ape the man,
Once more I tell thee !——

Fla. O Pascentius, O my brother !

Pas. Fear not, he shall not harm thee gentle Flavia.

(*To Horsus.*) Insolent presumptuous slave ! what would'st thou ?

Hor. I'll make thee dearly answer for thy rashness. [*They fight, and Horsus falls.*]

O I am wounded ! speak, what is thy name ?

But thou art brave, and I forgive thee this.

Good youth approach, I fain would tell thee something,

But O ! I'm faint, death's cold and heavy hand
Doth rest like ice upon my parting soul.

Go to the King I pray thee,

Bid him beware of Hengist.

[*Dies.*]

Pas. I now lament the deed that I have done.

Fla. O sadly doth repentance fit on us.

Pas.

Pas. How soon this lord of the creation dies ;
The errant'st coward now may spurn at him !

Fla. Sure he did make some mention of our
father,
And bade us tell him to beware of Hengist.

Pas. Something methinks he spoke to that effect,
This must our father know. [*Exeunt.*

SCENE V.

A Wood.

Enter HENGIST and Officer.

Heng. Hath Horsus yet been found ?

Off. Thrice hath the field with greatest care
been search'd,
But all in vain.

Heng. Then have I lost my first, my dearest
friend,
If he be slain, by the great Gods I swear,
I will revenge him on these Scottishmen ;
But whither are the Princes now retir'd ?

Off. Towards Badon Hill.

Heng. How fare our troops ?

Off. But ill, nay, very ill.

Heng. Indeed ! and sayest thou so ?

Off. The day was bloody and it cost us dear,
The Scots were firm, and fought us man to man ;
Four thousand lives were lost.

Heng. Good Heav'ns !

Enter another Officer.

What's thy business ?

2nd. Off.

2nd. Off. Fourteen thousand troops have join'd
our army,
And with them your daughter ; but look, she
comes !

Enter ROWENA.

Heng. Welcome Rowena !

(Rowena kneels.)

Row. O ! joy once more to see my father's
face.

Heng. Rise, rise my child !

Row. First with my kisses let me 'dew this
hand ;
And with these arms embrace my father's neck.

Enter Soldier.

Sold. From London, Vortigern is on his march !
And comes in haste to greet your late success.

Heng. 'Tis well ! go straight, put all in readi-
ness.

Retire ! I wou'd be private with my daughter.

Off. We obey, my lord. [*Exeunt Officers.*]

Heng. Daughter, thou heard'st but now o'th'
King's approach.

Row. Your Officer so express'd it !

Heng. True ! and do'st hear, much rests with
thee to do.

Row. If ought, dear father, my poor services
Can aid thee, but command ;—and I'll obey.

Heng. Thus then it is—I shall prepare a feast,
And greet the King with joy and merriment ;

Women

Women I know have very many ways,
And subtle traps to catch the hearts of men:
So practice all your arts to win his love.

Row. But shou'd I fail?

Heng. Nay, do not fear it; I do know him
well.

Come to my tent, and there we'll weigh this business.
[*Exeunt.*]

S C E N E VI.

*A magnificent Feast, VORTIGERN on a Throne,
HENGIST, WORTIMERUS, CATAGRINUS,
Lords and Ladies, with Attendants.*

Vor. To mirth we dedicate this noble feast!
And you brave Hengist we do greet withal.

Heng. O! my most gracious King, I am unworthy.

Vor. Thou did'st fight manfully, and bravely conquer.

Wine there! a health to Hengist! would that
Horsus

Were likewise here!

Lords. The King doth drink.

Heng. Thou sentest for me, noble Sir, to
fight;

I have done nought save that I promised;
Had I play'd other than the soldier's part,
Then had I tarnished the Saxon name.

[*Hengist speaks to one of the Lords aside.*]

Vor. Thou, Hengist, at our hands hast well
deserv'd;

We will consider, and reward thy labours.

Enter

Enter ROWENA.

Ye heavenly powers! what lovely maid is this,
Whose form might raise the blush in Dian's
cheek?

Heng. Rowena, Sir, my daughter, and your
slave.

(Rowena kneels.)

Row. All hail, great King!

Vor. O thou most lovely maiden!

Here let me pledge thee in this golden cup.
On its smooth brim I pray thee print a kiss,
That so I may inhale the roseate sweets,
And taste the nectar of those vermil lips.

[Takes the cup and drinks.]

This seat is empty, fair Rowena, take it,
And wou'd it were that which Jove's wife doth
hold!

Cata. It is Edmunda's place, the queen's, our
mother's.

Vor. Peace! she is unworthy of that station.

Wort. She, Sir, is queen, and tho' she is not
present,

Most righteously the law awards it her.

She that usurps it, breaks that sacred law—

Vor. How, do ye murmur, must I then humble
And stoop the neck to bear my children's yoke?
Begone, I say, lest that my present wrath
Make me forget the place by blood I hold,
And break the tie 'twixt father and his child.

Wort. We shall retire, my lord!

Vor. Here fit, bright maid, if I presage not
vainly,

E

Thou

Thou shalt, ere long, have right to take this place.

Row. How can I merit love of such a King?
An humble vassal only.

Vor. Thy meekness and fair looks have won my soul,

O! let thy tongue here title me thy lord!

Row. Already, Sir, have I avow'd you King.

Vor. And therefore here I do proclaim thee Queen.

Good Hengist speak! wilt thou consent hereto?

Heng. My lord! that honour is too weighty.

Vor. Then speak, my lords, what say ye to my choice?

True, I am married, and my wife doth live;
Yet none methinks by law can here be bound,
When the dread wrath of Heav'n doth shew itself,
And on his wedded wife doth send down madness.

1st. Lord. Methinks the law shou'd then proclaim it void.

Vor. Be it then void; and here I pledge myself,
To take this lovely maiden to my wife.

To thee, good Hengist, we resign all Kent,
As a sure earnest of our future bounty;
Proclaim it in the camp, and let each man
Receive in largess from our royal coffers,
That massy ore, which long hath lain entomb'd,
And now shall well reward our soldier's toils.

2nd Lord. The law allows not this, it is not justice.

3rd. Lord. That power lies in the Barons, not the King.

Vor. What! dare ye then dispute it?

All but 1st. Lord. We do.

3rd. Lord. And while the pow'r remains that's vested in us,

We

VORTIGERN.

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We ne'er will countenance such vile injustice,
That tramples on our dearest country's rights.

Vor. Take heed, lest you repent this your rash-
ness. [*Exeunt Lords.*]

SCENE *closes*, VORTIGERN *comes forward*.

Vor. O! these vile petty kings do make more
uproar

E'en than above, the thund'ring god himself.
To-morrow be the nuptials then proclaim'd;
And that Guorongus, that proud lord of Kent,
Who boldly in our presence call'd for justice,
His lands, his property, and all his titles,
We do invest in Hengist and his line.

[*Hengist bows.*]

Vor. to Row. Give me thy hand; let us retire,
my Queen! [*Exeunt.*]

SCENE VII.

An Anti-Chamber.

Enter WORTIMERUS and CATAGRINUS.

Wort. Shall we in quiet tamely suffer this?
See our most excellent and gentle mother,
In bold defiance of all sacred laws,
So basely treated?

Cata. Do they then think our substance form'd
of flint;

Or that our hearts are adamant itself?
Where is our brother? our dearest sister?

E 2

I fear,

I fear, indeed, they had just cause for flight.

Wort. Let's to the Princes, and our troops will follow.

They like not the rude treatment of these Saxons!

Cata. I do accept thine offer.

Enter Lords.

2nd Lord. Most gentle Princes, whither are ye bound?

Wort. To quit oppression, and to seek for justice.

3rd. Lord. Under your banners then we do enlist.

Cata. Speak, what hath now been done that thus ye quit

Your King, your country, and your weighty trust?

2nd Lord. The King, on the pretext of malady, Most basely hath divorc'd your mother from him, And means to take Rowena for his wife.

Wort. Gods!

2nd. Lord. And, her proud father, Hengist, to enrich,

He hath despoil'd me of mine heritage,

And from my sweet, my lovely babes cut off

Their rights, and ta'en from me my vast estate.

Wort. Then look you quick repair towards our camp,

Thither in secret we'll convey our mother;

So fare ye well, good lords.

[*Exeunt.*

SCENE

S C E N E VIII.

Enter AURELIUS, UTER, PASCENTIUS, *and*
FLAVIA.

Aur. Though bloody battle calls us forth again,
I'll rather part with life, with all on earth,
Than leave thee, Flavia, unprotected.

Uter. Hengist hath pitch'd on t'other side of
Badon ;
The noise of arms, and distant hum of soldiers,
Bespeak their hasty preparation ;
'Twere best to attack them early in the morn.

Aur. Then be it so.

Pas. And yet I must not 'gainst my father arm !

Fla. Indeed, thou'dst arm against thy sister too ;
Who wou'd protect me then, or calm my fear ;
Who sit and tell me tales of hope ? O ! no one :
It were too much, you cannot, must not leave me,

Enter Officer.

Off. Two sons of Vortigern do crave admittance.

Enter WORTIMERUS *and* CATAGRINUS.

Wort. My brother and my sister here !

Cata. O ! joy unthought of ! Oh ! unlook'd-for
bliss !

Fla. Say ! speak ! how fares it with my gentle
mother ?

Wort. Beseech thee, ask me not of her sad story.

Fla. Sad, say'st thou? Heav'n forefend; she is not dead?

Wort. Calm thyself, dearest sister, she lives still.

Fla. O! where, where, tell me, that with these moist tears

I may rain comfort on her wounded soul.

Wort. Let us retire.

SCENE IX.

Enter the Saxon and British Armies; they fight, and the Saxons are routed.

Enter HENGIST and Officer.

Heng. All, all is lost. Fly, fly, to the king's tent,
Bid him to London speedily repair;
Away, away, tarry not on your life.
A curse upon his sons for quitting us;
Shou'd they but follow up this victory,
My hopes, my every wish, for ever's blasted.

Enter WORTIMERUS.

Heng. Vile traitor both to your liege king and
father,
What blasted fiend, blacker than hell itself,
Cou'd prompt thee to this damned treachery?

Wort. Can'st thou, vile Saxon, thou base braggart, ask it?

'Tis thou, and on thy soul I'll prove it so.

Heng. Ask where's thy queen, and then I'll answer thee!

Wort.

Wort. Dares thus thy tongue with notes unmannerly
My heart-strings tear asunder? Fiend, have at thee.

[*They fight, Hengist falls.*]

Heng. Thine hand be blasted for this fatal blow.
And must then all my hopes lie buried here?

Wort. Yea, and thou need'st not much of Kent's domain,
A little mole-hill now will serve!

Heng. Yet chance one lives, that may avenge this deed;

'Tis the brave Horsus, 'tis my noble friend.

Wort. He fought his last,—
On him were found the secrets of thy plot :
Wou'dst thou not have enthrall'd my countrymen;
Was not thy daughter to have basely poison'd
Her king, and husband, and then wert not thou
To have seiz'd the crown? O! villain! villain!
traitor!

Heng. Yea, all, had I but liv'd a little longer,
Hell, swallow me not up! nor ope thy jaws
So wide. The fiends do tug and strain my heart-strings,

They burst, they crack—Oh! curs'd ambition!
Oh! [Dies.]

Enter CATAGRINUS.

Cata. All, all is ours, the ranks are broken—
They fly before us, come, let's follow them.
Good heav'ns, who's this?

[*Looking to the body of Hengist.*]

Wort. Hengist himself.

Cata. What, was it thou that this vile monster
fell'd?

Wort. Ay, marry; but he fought indeed like
one

That begg'd a little time to save his soul.

Cata. Our father hath towards London ta'en
his flight,

But yet Rowena is our prisoner.

Wort. That's well indeed! come let us on and
join them. [*Exeunt.*

S C E N E X.

VORTIGERN's Palace.

Enter VORTIGERN and 1st. Baron.

1st. Bar. Speed, my most gracious lord, think
on your safety,

They curse your troops, and dreadful is the car-
nage.

Vor. Where are my sons?

1st. Bar. Let not your tongue curse me when I
shall say.

Vor. Speak quick!

1st. Bar. With all their troops they join'd the
enemy,

And took with them their mother.

Enter Officer.

Vor. Well, Sir, and what more tidings do you
bring?

Off. To London's lofty walls they follow'd us.

Vor. I care not an' they follow'd you to hell:
Speak,

Speak, vassal! coward, speak! where is Rowena?

Off. Alas, I fear me, Sir, she's ta'en a prisoner.

Vor. Then all is lost indeed!—Thou sweetest death!

Bury but in this bosom thy fell dart,
And I will bless thee for the gentle deed.

Off. Shall I go forth, my lord, and man the walls?

Vor. Do as thou wilt,——

Good friend, I'd speak with thee.

Off. What, Sir, are your commands?

Vor. Thou art an old and ever faithful servant.

Off. My means have not kept pace with my desires.

Vor. I know thee well! wou'dst thou not serve me, friend?

Off. Aye, my good lord! put me but to the test,

And you shall see me smile at death himself.

Vor. I take thee at thy word; hold here my sword,

And but one friendly office render me;

Flinch not, strike deep and home; here lies my heart.

Off. O! if each drop that were to issue from thee,

Were a most precious jewel, and the whole

Were my reward, by heav'n I wou'd not do't!

Vor. Thou coward, what, afraid? O! shame, fie on't.

Off. Consider, Sir, your Queen yet lives.

Vor. Thou art in the right; to arms then; out,

Bring me my burnished shield, my weighty ax,

And

And man the northern gate, let every bell
Sound forth each brazen note until it rouse
Our tomb'd fathers from their silent graves,
To come and aid us at this pinch of time.
Ring till the very steeples totter down.
Mark well my orders, he that flinches, dies.
If ought of murmur's heard, choak it with
death.
Away, away, and now for victory.

END OF THE FOURTH ACT.

A C T V.

SCENE I.

Apartment in VORTIGERN'S Palace.

EDMUNDA *on a Couch,*

FLAVIA *and* PASCENTIUS.

Soft Music.

Edm. I NDEED, my gentle maid, indeed,
thou'rt kind,
And by those tears that glaze thy lovely eyes,
'Twould seem that truly thou did'st pity me.

Fla. Pity thee, O Gods!

Edm. Nay, wherefore weep ye both,
'Tis long, long since I was thus kindly treated,
Your pardon, but I fear you scoff at me.

Pas. Doth she yet know you?

Fla. Wou'd to Heaven she did.

Edm. And yet there was a maid that once did
love me,
Heigh ho! she went alack! I know not whither,
Thou ne'er did'st see her, else what I shall say
Methinks wou'd make thee vain, but yet indeed,
Thou

Thou seem'st right well to ape her pretty manners.

Fla. This is too much, I cannot bear all this.

Edm. Nay, nay, why shou'd'st thou wail and tremble so?

'Till this I thought that grief was only mine;
It is not fair to rob me of all comfort,
I thought thee honest, but indeed the world
Doth flatter, fawn, and stroke upon the face,
And sadly censure when the back is turn'd.

Paf. O! dearest mother, say, dost thou not know me?

Edm. Aye, aye, right well, thou'rt one by name a man:

Thy form is well enough, and thou may'st pass;
But hast thou a heart for melting pity?

For better be a brute,——

Than lack it under that most godlike form:
And yet I do thee wrong,—for even now

Thou didst add graces to that manly cheek,
With scalding tears! and for whom do you this?
For one that neither asks, nor merits it.

Enter WORTIMERUS and CATAGRINUS.

Wort. How doth she now?

Paf. Alas! she wanders yet, her mind's diseas'd.

Fla. I am that maiden lost, your loving daughter.

Edm. Bring here my glasses, stand before me here!

Now,

Now, now, I'll judge thee well, I'll see this straight,
And first her look was mild, in this thou'lt do;
Then she was kind, most excellent, and good,
Well, and so seemest thou; now for the last,
O! her heart was,——but thine I cannot see,
There thou deceivest me, I know thee not.
Yet if thou be my daughter,
On thy forehead is a mark,——

Away then with those locks from off thy front:
Now, let me look! O! gods, 'tis she, 'tis she.

Pas. She faints, she faints! this shock is too
afflicting

For her poor shatter'd, and disabled frame.

Fla. O! dearest, kindest, and most gentle mother.

Edm. Indeed, my brain is something cooler now,
I shou'd know you, Sir, and you too, nay all!
I'm very faint, alas, this joy o'ercomes me!

Fla. Sweet mother, you need rest, we'll lead you
in.

Edm. Then be it so, and wilt thou sit and
watch me?

Fla. Aye, and I'll kneel and pray, and sometimes
weep.

Edm. Lead then, I'll in to rest, come follow
me. [Exeunt.

Enter AURELIUS and UTER.

Aur. The breach is made, the southern gate is
forc'd,

Yet still doth he hold out, and hath ta'en flight
E'en to the tower, and there he'll wait the siege.

Uter.

Uter. Aurelius, your fair prisoner is no more.

Aur. How say'st thou?

Uter. Rowena hath ta'en poison and is dead.

Aur. Then hath a wicked soul taken its flight
From the most lovely frame that e'er was form'd;
To charm or to deceive. [*Exeunt.*]

S C E N E II.

Cæsar's Tower.

Enter 1st. Baron and Officer.

Bar. Is the King yet safe?

Off. He is, my lord.

Bar. Are many troops with us?

Off. Two thousand full well arm'd; and braver
men

Ne'er buckled on their limbs the glitt'ring steel.

O! what a fight it was to see the King.

No sooner had he reach'd the bridge, but firm,

And with a voice that wrung each coward heart,

He hail'd them to come on. Here then he stood,

In his right hand griping his massy ax,

Whilst with the left he held the brazen chain,—

Nor did he budge until each hardy soldier

Safely within the walls had entered.

Then waving thrice his cas'd hand in air,

And with a nod that spread pale fear around,

And seem'd to animate his bloody plume,

Triumphantly he bad them all defiance;

Then slowly turning with a horrid frown,

Soldiers,

Soldiers, he cry'd, foldiers! break down the
draw-bridge.

Like hail, in flight we pour'd on them our arrows,
Until their blood had stain'd the moat around
us,—

But look, my lord, here comes the King.

Enter VORTIGERN.

Vor. Why stand ye here, like fools, catching
the air,

What! think ye this to be your mistress' chamber?

Bar. My gracious Prince, we wait your orders
here.

Vor. Then fight I say.

Go get ye hence.—

Bar. I go.

Vor. No, no, thou must stay here, thou'rt my
sole prop;

I sicken fast, and 'gin again to flag.

Pour forth, I pray thee now, some flatt'ring
words,

For I am weary, and my lamp of life
Doth sadly linger, and wou'd fain go out,
For look you, my poor soul is fore diseas'd.

Bar. Courage, my noble Sir.—

Vor. Time was, alas! I needed not this spur.
But here's a secret, and a stinging thorn,
That wounds my troubled nerves, O! conscience!
conscience!

When thou didst cry, I strove to stop thy mouth;
By boldly thrusting on thee dire ambition,
Then I did think myself indeed a god!
But I was fore deceiv'd, for as I pass'd,
And travers'd in proud triumph the Basse-court,

There

There I saw death clad in most hideous colours,
A sight it was that did appal my soul,
Yea, curdled thick this mass of blood within me.
Full fifty breathless bodies struck my sight,
And some with gaping mouths did seem to
mock me.

Whilst others smiling in cold death itself,
Scoffingly bad me look on that, which soon
Wou'd wrench from off my brow this sacred
crown.

And make me too a subject like themselves ;
Subject ! to whom ? To thee, O sovereign death !
Who hast for thy domain this world immense ;
Church-yards and charnel-houses are thy haunts,
And hospitals thy sumptuous palaces,
And when thou would'it be merry, thou dost
chuse

The gaudy chamber of a dying King.
O! then thou dost ope wide thy hideous jaws,
And with rude laughter, and fantastic tricks,
Thou clap'st thy rattling fingers to thy sides;
And when this solemn mockery is ended,
With icy hand thou tak'st him by the feet,
And upward so, till thou dost reach the heart,
And wrap him in the cloak of lasting night.

Bar. Let not, my lord! your thoughts sink
you thus low,

But be advis'd, for should your gallant troops
Behold you thus, they might fall sick with fear.

Enter an Officer.

Off. My lord ! my lord !

Vor. Wherefore dost tremble thus, paper-fac'd knave !

What

What news shou'd make thee break thus rudely
in?

Off. Indeed, indeed, I fear to tell you, Sir.

Vor. Speak, vassal, speak! my soul defies thy
tongue.

Off. Your newly married Queen——

Vor. Speak, what of her?

Off. My lord, she hath ta'en poison, and is
dead.

Vor. Nay, shrink not from me now, be not
afraid,

There, lie my sword! and with it all my hopes.

Lord. Yet we may hope——

Vor. O! friend, let not thy tongue delude
with hope,

Too long against the Almighty have I fought.

Hope now is vain—I will not hear of it.

Off. Yet is the breach not made, and we are
strong,

Still we may out, my lord, and beat them off.

Vor. Can wicked souls e'er stand before the just;
Can strength outweigh the mighty hand of God?

No, no, never, never—O! repentance,

Why dost thou linger thus to ask admittance?

Thou com'st, alas! too late, thou'rt stale and
nauseous.

Where, where is now the good old murder'd
King?

In fields of bliss, where guilty souls ne'er come.

Enter another Officer.

2nd. Off. All, all is lost, the post is ta'en by
storm;

The breach is made, they pour in fast upon us.

Vor. If it be so, then will I out and die;

F

Now

Now aid, ye gods! but if ye will not hear,
 E'en then on hell I call again for succour!
 My friends have boldly stemm'd this tide of war,
 And shall I flinch at last and play the woman?
 Let any but Aurelius meet my arm,
 And this my sword shall ope a gate so wide,
 That the imprison'd soul shall take its flight,
 And either seek the murder'd King above,
 Or down and join me in the pit below. [*Exeunt.*]

SCENE III.

The Basse-Court of the Tower.

Enter AURELIUS and UTER.

Uter. Where, brother, are the sons of Vortigern?

Aur. I bade them with their gentle mother stay,
 For much 'twould have offended righteous
 Heav'n,

If 'gainst their father they had join'd with us.
 For here there always is a sacred tie,
 Which suffers not a son's uplifted hand,
 To strike a father, be he ne'er so vile.
 Did he not give him birth, and nourish him?
 And when thy direst foe becomes thy slave,
 Say, shouldst thou use revenge? No, rather
 shame him

With pity and all-softening charity;
 Then on a golden bed thou lay'st thy soul,
 And art on earth a blessed angel.

Uter. Brother, I do commend thee for this deed,
 Worthy a Prince, worthy a Briton too.
 But come! now, for this tyrant Vortigern!

Enter

Enter Officer.

Aur. What's the news?

Off. Th' ill fated King doth flee tow'rds Cæsar's
Tow'r,

And half his troops have fall'n into our hands.

Aur. Did ye obey mine orders?

Off. Aye, my good lord, in ev'ry circumstance.

Aur. Then Uter look, you march towards that
fame tow'r;

Let me, ye gods! but meet with this vile traitor,
And shou'd his soul not shrink beneath this sword,
Heav'n has no justice. [*Exeunt.*]

SCENE *the Gate of Cæsar's Tower.*

Enter Lord and Troops.

Lord. In, in, for they do scar our very backs,
And score us cowards in our hasty flight.

Enter VORTIGERN.

Vor. Give me another sword, I have so clogg'd
And badged this with blood, and slipp'ry gore,
That it doth mock my gripe. A sword, I say.

Lord. Here, here, my noble lord!

Vor. As with their bloods I stain'd my reeking
blade,
From summit of the Tow'r the raven croak'd,
Th' heavy-wing'd crow did chatter o'er my head,
And seem'd to bear black laurels for this brow!
Yet did not erst the sun-defying eagle

F 2

O'er

O'er the world-conquering Macedonian hero,
Flutter, and lead his way to victory?
Then from thy jarring throat spit pestilence,—
And bird of hell, I'll take thee for my guide.

Lord. The troops are enter'd,—please you follow them?

Vor. I love not to be shut in walls of flint;
My soul likes better this vast field of air!
Let them come on.

Lord. Consider, my dear lord, think of your safety.

Vor. Must we then die? then wherefore in a door,
And rot with famine and with pale-fac'd hunger?
No, it were better die nobly, full-stomach'd,
Than linger out a six week's tedious siege.—
Do as you list, here firmly will I stand.

Lord. Is it your pleasure they shall then proceed?

Vor. Aye, e'en to it straight.—
Nay stop! why shou'd all these be doom'd to death?
The crime is mine, not theirs.—

Enter AURELIUS.

Aur. Villain and traitor, at thy word I take thee.

Vor. Ah!—thy face the semblance of thy father's bears!

Thine eyes do pierce more than thy steel-clad arm.
Were fifty brave souls in that body cas'd,
Proudly I'd scorn them all, but alas! thy looks—

Aur. Thou perjured wretch! thou most abhorred villain!

Vor. Prate on, prate on; 'tis true I merit this;
But go not yet too far, lest, stripling boy,
You shou'd to indignation raise this blood,
Which

Which thou hast turn'd from out its wonted
course,

And make it fall on thee.

Aur. Alike, I do defy thy rage and thee;
Where is my father!

Vor. Curse upon thee, thou grat'st my soul,
O! if around this tatter'd conscience, e'er
Did cling repentance, I now cast it off.

[They fight and pause.]

Yet stand aloof, and hear me yet a while?

Aur. I will not.

Vor. 'Twere better that thou should'st, lest wax-
ing warm

I rise, and pour upon thy unform'd limbs
That rage which 'gins to swell within my veins,
And lays a double murder on my soul.

Aur. Come on, come on, I say!

[They fight, Vortigern is thrown to the ground.]

Now, tyrant, now, I have thee in my power.

Vor. Dost think I'll blanch my face, and be a
coward?

A lily coward? No! strike then——

I ne'er will ask thy mercy.

Aur. Now, traitor, where's my father?

Vor. Murdered.

Aur. And by whom?

Vor. Is not the crown thine own?

Aur. Aye, and is so by right; then speak, I say.

Vor. I will not, boy, had'st thou ten thousand
voices,

And lungs of brass to give them utterance,
I would not answer ought.

Aur. Then die!

(FLAVIA comes forward.)

Fla. O stop, Aurelius!

He

He is still my father!

Vor. My daughter here! then curse thy tardy hand,
That lingers so in doing of its office;
Strike, strike, I do beseech thee, for I'm sick,
And do abhor the very light of Heaven.

Fla. O! mercy! on my knees I beg for mercy.

Vor. 'Twas I, 'twas I, this hand thy father murdered.

Aur. And say'st thou this, e'en to my face?

Vor. Aye, to thy face, and in thy ears I'll din it,
'Till thou for mercy's sake shalt strike the blow.

Enter WORTIMERUS, CATAGRINUS, *Soldiers,*
Lords, &c.

Wort. What! my father?

Aur. My Flavia, for thy sake I grant him life.

Vor. In charity then I pray ye bear me hence!

Aur. Aye, lead him towards the Friars.

Vor. Yea, where ye list, but take me from this fight.
[*Vor. is led out.*]

Aur. How fares Edmunda?

Wort. Her mind is somewhat better, yet she's feeble.

Aur. Well! of your father doth she e'er say ought?

Wort. Aye, truly, but she haply thinks him dead.

Enter UTER.

Uter. Of all, the King hath truly made confession,

To

To you he justly renders up the crown,
And bade me hail you rightful King of Britain.

(*All Kneel.*)

All. Hail to Aurelius,
Lawful King of Britain.

PASCENTIUS *enters.*

Pas. to Aur. Vortigern on thee bestows our sister,

And bade me, in his name, present her hand——

Aur. Which I do kiss, and with the self same
breath,

Do hail her wife, and Britain's lovely Queen.

All. All hail to Flavia, Queen of Britain.

Aur. Much, we confess, we owe to all here present ;

Each distinct service we shall well repay,

As best befits the dignity of our state ;

To-morrow, Lords, we'll meet at Westminster,

For your ripe ages, and experience,

Must teach our young and giddy years the way,

To sow content after these dismal times.

[*Curtain drops.*]

“ FOOL *comes forward.* ”

“ Methinks but now I heard some gentles say,

“ Where's master Fool ? I'troth he's run away.

“ Right ! for look you, when there be danger

“ near,

“ He then most courage hath who most doth fear ;

“ Besides,

“ Besides, observe, I came not here to fight,
“ Let him that dares, say nay, for I am right ;
“ I will not out and risk a knocking down,
“ For though I like our King, I like my crown ;
“ Besides, there is a time for Fools to play,
“ But then they must have nought, save good to
“ say.
“ Chance you will ask if this be tragedy,
“ We kill indeed, yet still 'tis comedy ;
“ For none save bad do fall, which draws no tear,
“ Nor lets compassion sway your tender ear ;
“ Play ! we'll grant it—the story ye have read,
“ For 'tis well chronicled in Hollinshed ;
“ Give then your plaudits, and when that be
“ done,
“ Your Fool shall bow, and thank ye ev'ry one.”

F I N I S.

EPILOGUE.

Written by the late ROBERT MERRY, Esq.

Spoken by Mrs. JORDAN.

YE solemn critics ! wheresoe'er you're seated,
To grant a favour may you be entreated ?
For which I'll pay you proper adoration,
And strive to please you—that is my vocation :
Then do not frown, but give due share of praise,
Nor rend from Shakespeare's tomb the sacred bays.
The scatter'd flow'rs ! he left benignly save !
Posthumous flow'rs ! the garland of the grave !
What tho' he liv'd two hundred years ago,
He knew you very well, as I will shew :
His pencil sketch'd you, and that seldom errs ;
You're all, whate'er you think, *his* characters.
How !—do you doubt it ?—cast your eyes around,
In ev'ry corner of this house they're found.
Observe the jolly grazier in the pit,
Why, he is Falstaff, fat, and full of wit ;—
In fun and feasting places his delight,
And with his Dolly emulates the Knight.
Look at that youth, whose countenance of woe
Denotes a tender-hearted Romeo ;

G

He

He only wishes, tho' he dare not speak,
 'To be a glove to touch his Juliet's cheek ;
 While she, from yonder terrace, smiles serene,
 And longs with him to play the garden scene.
 But O! I tremble now,—there sits a man,
 Rugged and rough, a very Caliban!
 He growls out his displeasure—'tis a shame!
 Do, dear Miranda! make the monster tame.
 And you, my pretty Beatrice, don't fret,
 Your Benedick is fond of a coquette.
 For tho' he vows he'll think no more about you,
 He means to marry—he can't live without you.
 Kind faithful Imogens are here, to charm us,
 Mad Edgars, Ancient Pistols to alarm us,
 And Hotspurs too, who seek the glorious boon,
 “ To pluck bright honour from the pale-fac'd
 moon.”

Besides, we have our Touchstones, Shylocks dire,
 Iagos false, and many a shallow Squire.
 Nay, there are ladies, who in their own houses,
 Are Deldemonas, plagu'd with jealous spouses.
 'Tis true, there is some change, I must confess,
 Since Shakespeare's time, at least in point of
 dress.

The ruffs are gone, and the long female waist
 Yields to the Grecian more voluptuous taste ;
 While circling braids the copious tresses bind,
 And the bare neck spreads beautiful behind.
 Our senators and peers no longer go
 Like men in armour glitt'ring in a row ;

But,

But, for the cloak and pointed beard we note
The close-cropt head, and little short great-coat.
Yet is the modern Briton still the same,
Eager to cherish, and averse to blame ;
Foe to deception, ready to defend,
A kind protector and a gen'rous friend.

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HENRY THE SECOND,

An Historical Drama.

Supposed to be written by the Author

OF

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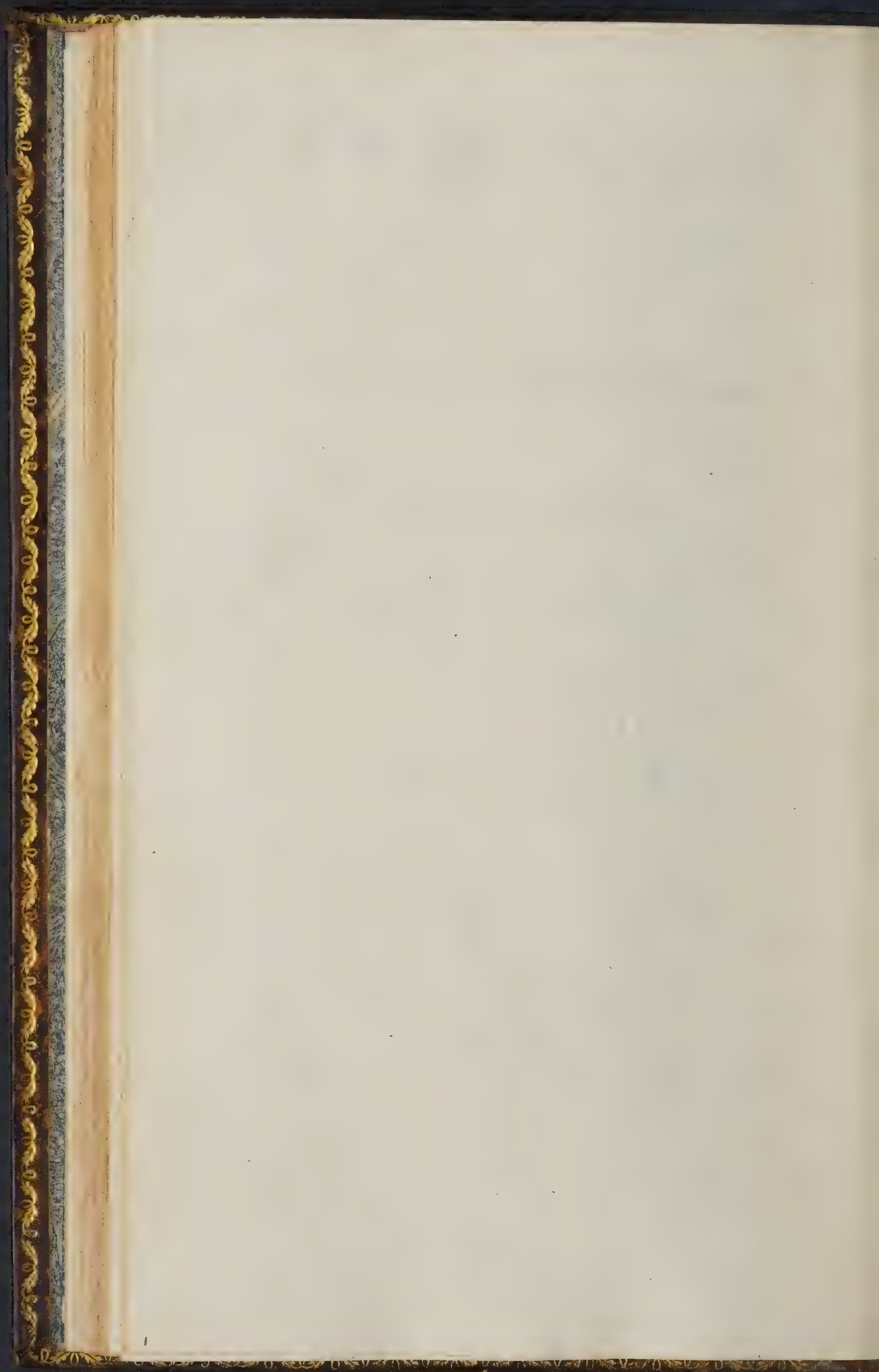
BY THE AUTHOR

O F

VORTIGERN.

LONDON:
PRINTED FOR J. BARKER,
Dramatic Repository,
GREAT RUSSELL-STREET, COVENT-GARDEN.

1799.



Advertisement.

THE Editor of the following sheets feels it a duty incumbent upon him, to lay before the public some particulars relative to the manner in which they came into his possession.

A considerable time after the play of Vortigern was produced, he received from the hands of his son about four hundred lines of this play, in his own hand-writing, and with them a solemn declaration, that they were faithfully copied from ancient and original papers; and that the remainder should be transcribed with all convenient speed. The title and two other leaves only were produced of the old MS. and these were asserted to be all that ever would appear in that state; the gentleman, *i. e.* the supposed original proprietor of the papers, having expressed much dissatisfaction at the objections made by the public to the uncouthness of the orthography.

After frequent and urgent solicitation on the part of the Editor to receive the remainder of the play, and waiting many months, he at length obtained it from his son, with this apology: "that the gentleman who gave them was of a capricious disposition, and would only suffer them to be copied at certain times, when he was in the humour." With these representations, added to the repeated assurances of their being authentic, the Editor was obliged to remain satisfied, nor can he feel himself disposed to give implicit credit to any assertions that have been since made from the same quarter; as they stand in direct opposition to what had been before solemnly stated as fact.

The Editor here thinks it necessary, in order to prove his right in publishing this play, to state the following quotation
a from

from a letter written by his son, dated June 14, 1796, "As
 " you have yet no proof but my parole for the gift of
 " Henry II. I now tell you that I beg your acceptance of
 " the publication of Vortigern, and the whole of the
 " profits of Henry II."

This piece is here given almost verbatim from the MS. which is not divided into Acts, nor in many places is any punctuation attended to. The lines in this play, as well as in Vortigern, are numerated, and in many places erroneously. Of its merits the Editor has never intimated an opinion, but he is encouraged by that of others better enabled to form a judgment, and by their approbation is emboldened to lay it before the public. One circumstance relative to this production he thinks necessary to advert to, as it may possibly at a future day lead to some further knowledge of the true history of this as well as the other papers: Some months after this play was produced, the Editor accidentally met with a passage in the *Biographia Dramatica*, of which the following is an extract: "Henry I. and
 " Henry II. by Wm. Shakespeare and Rob. Davenport.
 " In the books of the Stationers Company, the 9th of
 " Sept. 1653, an entry is made of the above title; but what
 " species of the drama it was, or whether one or two performances, are facts not ascertained. Whatever it might
 " be, it suffered in the general havoc made by Mr. Warburton's servant."

The Editor has examined this entry, which was made by Humphry Mosely, a bookseller of that period, and finds it correctly stated, but with the following additional plays entered by the same person, and on the same day, viz. "The
 " History of Cardenio, by Mr. Fletcher and Shakespeare,
 " and The Merry Devill of Edmonton, by Wm. Shakespeare."
 " On enquiry, he is credibly informed by those who knew Mr. Warburton above-mentioned, that a fire happened at his house in the neighbourhood of Fleet-street,
 about

about 36 years ago, and destroyed his effects, amongst which were many books and MSS.

When the fact above related was mentioned by the Editor to his son, *he expressed much surprise and satisfaction; observing that "he presumed the world would now no longer entertain a doubt of the validity of the papers."* This circumstance, added to the general appearance on the face of the MSS. of their having been scorched by fire, gave additional weight to their supposed originality, and fuller confidence to the Editor, in his intention of laying these plays before the world. As this is probably the last time he may ever find occasion to address the public on the subject of these mysterious papers, so long a matter of controversy with them, and of unspeakable inconvenience to himself, he thinks it necessary here to declare, that *he has had no intercourse or communication with the cause of all this public and domestic misfortune, for near three years, the period at which the party alluded to quitted his house, except one meeting had at the request and in the presence of Mr. Albany Wallis, of Norfolk-street.*

At this meeting for the first time the party above-mentioned declared himself the author of all the papers, and that he was about publishing the same to the world. Of the truth of this declaration the public will form their opinion; but, let that opinion be what it may, *the Editor here most solemnly reiterates his protestation, that all sources of information that have ever reached him on the subject of these papers, he has unreservedly communicated to the public; of whom he asks that only to which he feels and knows he is justly and honestly entitled, viz. to be considered by them as in honour and honesty utterly incapable, in every character either as associate or principal, of intentional imposture, or of laying before them papers, as genuine, which, whatever they may be, he did not believe to be of that description.*

DRAMATIS

DRAMATIS PERSONÆ.

KING HENRY THE SECOND.

RICHARD, }
JOHN, } His Sons.
HENRY, }

THOMAS BECKET.

THEOBALD, Archbishop of Canterbury.

LORD DE CLIFFORD.

ROBERT, Earl of Leicester.

HUGH, Earl of Chester.

ROGER MOWBRAY.

JOHN DE SALISBURY.

NICHOLAS BREAKSPEARE.

WILLIAM, King of Scotland.

QUEEN ELEANOR.

ROSAMOND, Daughter to Lord de Clifford.

NURSE to Rosamond.

SIR HUGH MORVELE, }
SIR REGINALD BERISON, } The 4 Knights who
SIR WILLIAM TRACY, } flew Becket.
SIR RICHARD BRYTO, }

HENRY THE SECOND.

A C T I.

SCENE I.

France.

*The English Camp and a Castle besieged—K. HENRY,
HUGH, EARL OF CHESTER, ROBERT, EARL
OF LEICESTER, and ROGER MOWERAY—
Soldiers, &c.*

Henry.

SAY noble Chester! have yet mine Heralds
From out their brazen and long neck'd
trumps,
Spoke English thunder to these dastard French,
And hail'd their quick surrender of this fort?
Or will they ruffle Harry's smiling brow,
And by denial dare him to a siege?

Ches. Dread Sir, they here attend your will.

Hen. Then let the English lions roar!

B

Heralds

HENRY THE SECOND.

Heralds sound.

Officer answers from the Castle.

Off. Speak! who are ye that do crave this
parley,
And with such loud and bellowing clangor, 10
Wou'd from death's sleep, awaken us to hear?

Hen. Unfurl my banner! let it wave on high,
That it reflect the bloody colour'd coat
Of England's lions rampant,
Upon yonder meagre looking Frenchman.
'Tis I! Harry bids ye to surrender!

Off. Then let proud Harry know, we'll stand
the siege,
'Fore God we swore allegiance to our King.

Hen. Am not I Plantagenet? son of Maude,
Who daughter was to noble Harry First, 20
And he third Son of Norman William!
Who is't then, will dare usurp my title?

Off. King Lewis of France!

Hen. Then short-mantled Harry bids ye be-
ware!

For as the tigress, when stirr'd from her whelp,
Will piece-meal tear the intruding hunter,
So is't with me, if low'ring on these smiles
Ye rouse the dunny spirit of revenge.

A Horn without.

Whence is that sound?

Leic. 'Tis a messenger my liege,
Who comes in haste with letters to your grace.
Mes-

HENRY THE SECOND.

3

Messenger enters.

Mess. This packet is from Theobald Archbishop of Canterbury. This from your noble peers; and lastly, this from Lady Eleanor your queen.

Hen. Come last, and yet far sweetest of them all.

[Reads.]

“ Though short my letter, yet do I know my
 “ Harry’s love will think it sweeter far, than
 “ All others—In brief your packets do relate,
 “ That Stephen hath breathed his last in th’ Abbey
 “ Of Dover—your people all await to hail you
 King. 40

“ But I the most desire to see thee, for O! my

“ Harry, mine is the call of eager love,

Thine ELEANOR.”

Thanks!—and yet it boots not that I should
 thank.

O! Stephen, living, thou did’st wrong me much,
 Usurping both my crown and dignity;
 And in the face of God, did’st break that
 oath,

Which truly to my mother thou did’st swear:
 Yet for all this, do I now pity thee,
 For thou stand’st ’fore a great, all-piercing judge!
 Whose even hand, the scale of justice bears, 50
 Whose all commanding eye, fathoms the soul,
 Searches e’en to the very thought of sin,
 And proves himself at once a mighty god,
 Wonderful and incomprehensible!
 So then by death, I now do gain a crown,
 By death must lose it, is’t not so good lord?

Leic. Aye, an’t please your grace.

B 2

Hen.

Hen. Why look then how this same death doth
 scoff us,
 Cozening our minds with sweet delusive thoughts,
 Binding round our temples, the glitt'ring crown,

60

Whilst we, (short witted fools) accept the task,
 Dream but of smiles, look but for golden joys;
 Now mark the chastisement of our conceits,
 This regal gem becomes a galling thorn,
 Treason, and a whole catalogue of ills,
 That are attendant on a kingly state,
 Rush in upon our frail bark of nature,
 Buffet us to and fro, with the fell blast,
 Which like a meagre chatt'ring ague fit,
 Turns our stern manhoods into peevish fear, 70
 Sours the full tide of sweet with bitterness,
 Till lastly tired with this dalliance,
 The wick of life quite dwindled and bewasted,
 We lay us down, beg only ground enough
 To sink a grave, then groan and welcome death.

Ches. Prithee, my good lord, stand not so pen-
 sive,
 Hood not thus your face within your mantle,
 You speak but of death! whose grinning visage
 So oft times you have dared in bloody fight.

Hen. No more, no more, give me your par-
 dons, all, 80
 I muse too long——O! Almighty father,
 Since your dread pleasure be to crown me king,
 I do accept the trust. (*kneels*) But hear my
 vow;

Shou'd I, in discharge of this great office,
 Either through sickness, age, or foul mouth'd
 lie,
 Be led from out the right course of justice,

Then

HENRY THE SECOND.

5

Then shall I hope for mercy at your hand ;
But, if willingly I do fail, give me
Judgment, O give me death, less I crave not.

Leic. Wer't not well, my lord, you ship for
England, 90
Stephen hath friends yet left ?

Mow. Yea, truly ! full well we know, how
fickle,
Light and inconstant are the people's loves.

Hen. Well ! be they as they may, I will not
budge,
England shall henceforth be at my command,
Spight of those haughty spirits that will dare
To cross me most in that which is my right ;
And so shall these intruding Frenchmen too,
Ere I go hence.

Cbes. Be advis'd my lord, this delay ——— 100

Hen. Sound ! I say, I will nought of council
hear,
What ! have my course obstructed by this mole-
hill,
This petty fort, mann'd with such palsied curs,
Such rav'nous lean back'd hounds, whose looks
disgrace
The jellied prisoner that awaits to hear
The solemn judgment pass'd upon his life;
I'de not give fifty, fifty ! nay not five
Of these, my sturdy bow-men, for a world
Of such loons. Prithee ! look how they do peep
Like craz'd and blinking owls from out their
nests, 110
Shrinking at sight of the tow'ring eagle.
Draw, archers, draw your arrows to their steels.

Trumpet from the Castle.

Off. What are your offers?

Hen. Ope wide your gates, surrender to our
wills,
Therein you'll 'scape the rod of correction.

Off. Sire, we submit, and lay us at your
mercy.

Hen. 'Tis well !
For the lion knows where to deal vengeance,
Where to shew his mercy.

Gates open.

Come, Lords! let's in, dispatch our letters
straight,
Then ship for England!

120

[*Exeunt.*]

SCENE in London.

A Room.

Enter BECKET.

Beck. Why thus and thus it is, the matter ar-
gu'd,
Both parts justly weigh'd and well consider'd,
Judgment too given, with no partial tongue,
Will speak this verdict.—
Happiness with ambition bears no kin,
For thus, content dwells not with ambition,
And he who lacks content, lacks happiness;

This

HENRY THE SECOND.

7

This lab'ring mind then tells me, 'twou'd be
happy,

Yet whispers, I wou'd fain be greater too; 130

Peace! thou vile intruding mass of folly!

Thou'dst willingly embrace two properties

Who bear such hatred and dread enmity,

That soon they'd kindle, blaze and burn thee up;

Of one then make thy choice, more thou can'st
not;

Give me then greatness—hath not fortune bow'd
Stoop'd, cring'd, yea knelt that I shou'd raise her
up.

For what was Becket, but a poor man's son?

That walks the common vulgar road of life,

Dies, when dead, is lost and quite forgotten. 140

What is Becket now? the friend of Theobald!

Who ranks in station and in dignity,

Next to the King himself, yea, and more too,

For he doth bear the crown of Holy Church,

Is king and lord over the souls of men,

And not of earthly matters, the frail judge.

Enter a Messenger.

Whence come you, Sir?

Mess. From Theobald, who now is on his road
from Canterbury hither. He bad me speed be-
fore, and to yourself deliver this letter. 150

Messenger goes out.

BECKET *reads.*

“*Beck.* As I do tender thee Becket, most dearly,

“and fain wou'd bring thee to quick advancement,

“I do hereby greet thee with the title of ARCH-

B 4

“DEACON

§ HENRY THE SECOND.

“ DEACON of MY CHURCH, more shall be thine ere
 “ long. Thou know’st the King will soon be here,
 “ and if I can serve thee ought there too, thou
 “ may’st command me.

Thine THEOBALD.”

What ! even so, ARCHDEACON of my church,
 Aye, and if my senses do not mock me,
 More shall be thine ere long, so went the tune,
 And in conclusion, “ Thou may’st command
 “ me.” 160

Now, Becket, say to thyself, wou’d’st be poor?
 Wou’d’st shun ambition, wou’d’st spurn at great-
 ness,

No ! no ! thou’rt an hungred, and I’le feed
 thee.

Off then, vile suit ! go cover silly knaves,
 That know to cringe whene’er the great man
 frowns ;

Henceforth be thou stubborn, proud and haugh-
 ty,

If majesty do frown ! knit thou thy brow ;
 If he do smile, why then, be thou placid ;
 Yet always, bear in mind thy dignity. 170

But hold ! who is’t comes hither to lord me ?

Brave Harry ! proud and haughty too as I,
 Noble his spirit, as his mind is great ;

Distant to those who most he doth esteem,

Yea, in so much, that no man e’er cou’d say,

I was the friend, the favour’d of my Prince ;

If so, Becket, how compass thy great ends ?

Shame, thou fickle mind, wilt thou flag at last ?

Doth not the seaman, for some hundred marks,

Plough the rude waves, and in a little case, 180

Scarce bigger in compass than a needle’s eye

When floating on this wond’rous element,

Doth

HENRY THE SECOND.

9

Doth he not risk both health and life to boot,
 And shall Becket be afraid? fye! shame on't!
 O! attend then each organ of the soul,
 Hear thy stern lord's peremptory decree,
 And on thy coronet grave thou these words:
 If Becket lives, then lives he in greatness;
 If not, why then content, will Becket die,
 Life, sans renown, a thing so lowly is, 190
 That dusky oblivion were sweeter far.

*Enter JOHN DE SALISBURY, afterwards BECKET'S
 Secretary.*

How now, what news, good Salisbury?

Salis. The noble Henry, by express we learn,
 Is landed on the Welch coast.

Beck. So soon?

Salis. Most truly, Sir, and it shou'd seem as if,
 The roaring surge were proud to bear him up,
 Afar the waves came tow'ring towards his ship,
 And dipt his pendant in the wat'ry clouds;
 At length, quite hoarse, they bow'd their stub-
 born backs, 200
 Crook'd their pointed tops, then soon dissolving,
 Bath'd and fondled the tough and well ribb'd
 bark,
 In plains of milky and thick spangled foam.
 The blanket sails swell'd as though they wou'd
 crack
 And shiver the twisted cords that held them,
 Both winds and waves in amity were leagu'd,
 And strove who most cou'd aid his homeward
 course.

Beck. Comes he to London?

10 HENRY THE SECOND.

Salis. Aye!

And purposes his coronation straight. 210

Beck. Then Heaven grant, as he is brave and
just,

That in uprightness, he rule his people,
And 'fore all, that he in no wise usurp
The high and sacred rights of holy church!

Salis. Fear him not, Sir.

Beck. But I do fear, and much, let me tell
thee;

Good Salisbury! I have observed thee well,
In fasting, in prayer, and in merriment,
And find thee patient, devout, and sober,
A man, as 'twere, purg'd of earthly sin, 220
Upon whose soul blest virtue stamp'd her seal,
And mark'd it for her own;

One, to whose care, I wou'd intrust the key
That thou might'st read the secrets of my soul,
Prithee to me, bow not obedience!
I am not wont to let my tongue speak praise,
When my whole mind bears it not company.

Salis. So great is the praise. I so unworthy,
That should I strive to answer as I ought,
My simple tongue wou'd mar my wish to thank
you. 230

Beck. Let the desire suffice, then for the act;
Long have I laboured to reward thy truth,
And now that fortune hath advanc'd me high,
And placed her budding branch within my hand,
I will pluck off one tender flow'r or twain
Which nourish'd under my aspiring sun,
Shall bloom and carpet out thy walk of life,
With tissu'd and thick embroider'd honours.
Henceforth, then be thou Becket's Secretary!
Who now is titled Theobald's Archdeacon. 240

Salis.

HENRY THE SECOND.

11

Salis. How, my good Sir?

Beck. Aye, and hath a voice, will plead in's behalf,

Prithee, o'erlook this paper!

Salis. In faith, 'tis even so.

Beck. Too long we tarry, come let's away,
And greet the noble Theobald who ere this,
Is safe arriv'd at Westminster.

Scene in Wales.

LORD DE CLIFFORD's Castle.

Enter ROSAMOND with a Book.

Rosa. Wherefore, shou'd I thus read the works
of man?

Is not thy book, O! nature, sweeter far;
Can all the sound and studied argument, 250
Or the high speech of proud philosophy
Raise in this mind such grand, such heav'nly
thoughts,

As the bright East, where the hot blazing sun,
Now mounting upward, 'gins his daily course,
Staining the firmament with crimson hue,
Or wou'd ye blur a thousand, thousand leaves,
You ne'er cou'd speak of beauty half so well
As yonder hyacinth! whose leaf is fring'd
With the big glitt'ring drop of chrystal dew,
That trembles, moistens, and now melts away, 260

Farewel! thou blotted page, I'll read no more.

Enter HENRY and MOWBRAY.

But who comes here, 'twere best I should retire.
Hen.

Hen. Stay ! sweetest lady, I conjure thee, stay,
O fly not thus like nimble footed stag !
But chance, thou art some fairy of the morn,
Gathering a Christ thorn, or pretty night shade,
To fill thine evening incantation up.

Rosa. What shou'd I do ?

Hen. Mowbray, an thou lov'st me look not on
her, 270
For if thou do'st, thou'lt burn with that same
fire

That I do now. So, prithee leave me straight.

Mow. My gracious Sir, be not over rash.

Hen. Leave me ! I charge thee, and quickly
too.

Mow. I must obey——
O grant this morning, which now looks so bright,
Prove not hereafter Harry's blackest night.

Hen. Speak, what art thou ? of woman the
most fair.

Rosa. I am daughter, Sir, of Lord de Clif-
ford,
My name is Rosamond. 280

Hen. O, that I cou'd mellow this iron tongue,
And fashion it to music of soft love,
But so it is, from my childhood, upwards,
I have been bred in hoarse and jarring war,
My bud of youth, within a camp was spent ;
There have I sat upon a soldier's knee,
Whilst round my neck was twin'd a giant arm
So toughly sat, that one might say, indeed,
The sinews that did work it were of brass ;
There 'twas I learnt the soldier's untun'd song,
The morning onset, and the bloody fray. 290
Here

HENRY THE SECOND. 13

Here cours'd the bristly main'd and foaming
steed,

With fire-spitting eye, and trampling hoof !
Upon whose back bestrode an English knight !
Unnumber'd were the youths of France he flew,
Or Bourbon's sons, or Orlean's proud heirs !
How many pedigrees and cotes d'armures
Beneath his mighty arm were blotted out ?
Whilst smoaking from their horses flanks, ran
down

The blood of all their proud nobility. 300

Then wou'd he tell, how long the fight did last,
From six i'the morn tille evening clocks told eight,
How then they bore from off the blood-stain'd
field,

Their clay-cold fathers, brothers, countrymen ;
Here wou'd they pause awhile,
For memory did whisper pleasures past,
Till I, with childish innocence look'd up
And bad them to go on. But O! the fight
Turn'd towards Heaven, where their glist'ring
eyes,

Whilst the big tears from off their rugged chins,

310
Rain'd down upon my young and beardless face ;
I wou'd have chid silence, but cou'd not ;
For if such sturdy hearts as theirs cou'd melt,
Why then methought, there must be cause in-
deed.

This lady was my school, thus was I taught,
And if such tales can please thy tender ear,
Rough and unpolish'd, as most true they are,
Behold the man will sit the live-long day,
Of ling'ring sieges, marchings, battles tell,
Where thirsty Mars so glut hath been with blood

320
That

That sick'ning appetite yearn'd out.—No more!

Rosa. I pray you, Sir, accept a maiden's thanks;

Your phrase so aptly paints the tale you tell,
It but proclaims you soldier, that you are.

Enter NURSE.

Nurse. My gentle mistress, my sweet lady,
rare news,
Rare news!

Rosa. How Nurse?

Nurse. In sooth, I lack breath, but tell me,
pretty Rose, where hast been sweet-heart? by my
faith, I have sought thee a long hour, O! me.
A man, come away lady, he hath a vile wicked
look withal.

Hen. Truly, Nurse, do'st think so dame?

Nurse. Aye, marry do I, why look ye lady, I'll
be sworn to't then, why his wickedness hangeth
at's eye, as doth the ivy bush at wine seller's
door. O! the rogue.

Rosa. Silence, Nurse, I beseech thee, silence.

Nurse. O! thou mad dancing man, thou
wicked piper, but I will stop thy cheating music,
marry will I. Come lady, you must to your
father straight.

Rosa. Farewel, Sir.

Nurse. Aye, go too, vile man, go mend thy-
self, farewell.

[*Exeunt.*

Hen.

HENRY THE SECOND. 15

Hen. Yet one word more! nay gone! then fare thee well!

Sweet Rose of England, blushing innocence,
Farewel! to Harry's peace alike farewell!
For what avails my crown, or kingly pow'r,
My look majestic, commanding awe,
My ermin'd robe, my sceptre-gripping hand,
My golden throne, my fretted canopy, 350
My pliant court, and all this shew of pomp,
What avail these, when peace, sweet peace is gone?

But now Harry was himself; was a King!
How chang'd his high condition! now a slave!
This England and the million souls therein,
All cou'd this my little brain encompass;
And now the veriest peasant in my land,
Is in his mind, a God compar'd to me;
For I am slave to love, and what is love?
An ever burning and consuming fire, 360
A knawing viper in the heart, a thorn
Upon the nightly pillow—Enemy
To sleep, that under semblance of cold death
Rocks all our cares in soft oblivion.

Enter MOWBRAY.

How is't Mowbray that thus you dare intrude
And rudely break upon our meditations?
Your absence wou'd better have beseem'd you.

Mow. I meant not to offend your grace.

Hen. Why truly Mowbray I believe thee honest!
But well thou know'st how peevish men do grow, 370

When all within is not at ease
But to thine errand, what wou'd'st thou with us?
Mow.

16 HENRY THE SECOND.

Mow. The Lord de Clifford greets your safe return,
And loyally doth tender you his love;
He hath moreover pray'd your grace t'accept
His goods and castle to your present use.

Hen. Stands he number'd with those that have
been ours?

Mow. Yea, for he oppos'd th'ambitious Stephen.

Hen. Why then we do receive his proffer'd love,
And for this night, we title him our host. 380
Tomorrow we must on towards London.

Mow. I shall make known your royal pleasure.

Hen. Why do so—and tell the Earl of Chester
And Lord Robert that I wou'd see them straight.
Look that you also bear them company.

[*Exeunt.*]

A Street in London.

Two Gentlemen meeting.

1st Gent. Wil't please you tell if the King pass
this way.

2nd Gent. In faith, I wou'd instruct kind Sir,
but lack the means—you beg an answer where
I myself wou'd fain have questioned.

1st Gent. Goes he not to Westminster?

2nd Gent. So I have heard by the way, by one
of Theobald's gentlemen, who further did instruct
me of his coronation.

1st Gent. Will it be long ere that?

2nd

HENRY THE SECOND. 17

2nd Gent. 'Tomorrow by twelve o'th' clock.

1st Gent. If report bely him not, he lacks nor wisdom, nor courage.

2nd Gent. Of that methinks the French can give us better account.—

Drums without, and shouting.

So then we have not lost our labour, Sir, the clamorous and o'erjoy'd people give note of his approach.

1st Gent. We will if't please you retire from out the common way and thereby 'scape the croud.

2nd Gent. Most willingly.

[*Exeunt.*

*Enter KING HENRY, EARL OF LEICESTER,
MOWBRAY, LORD DE CLIFFORD, Soldiers, and People shouting.—*

Peo. Long live King Henry! God save King Henry! long live the King—.

Hen. My friends and citizens! I thank ye all!
Not as a King, but as an Englishman
And brother. We are all children alike, 410
One earth doth nourish us, one only blood
Runs through our veins, animates our bodies;
And is in property so passing rare,
It stamps ye on this earth so many gods!
From every nation; bring me forth one soul,
Place too an Englishman among the rest,
And if he carry not the mark so strong

C

That I do single him, and him alone,
 May I ne'er look for happiness to come.
 My English hearts, my loving countrymen, 420
 When in the fertile plains of Normandy,
 My harrafs'd soldiers have enrounded been,
 With French, that number'd wou'd make five
 times ours,

When this gay glitt'ring troop we had attack'd,
 Routed and broken down; not even then
 Cou'd all my joy for such a victory,
 Give half the pleasure that I now do feel,
 In finding thus my people, at the last,
 True to their God, their country and their King.

Peo. Long live the King! God save the King!
 long live King Henry.

Trumpet sounds.

Enter QUEEN ELEANOR, *with* PRINCE RICHARD
and JOHN *her* Sons.

Ele. Where, where is my love? where is my
 Husband?

Hen. Here, my Nell, come to thy Harry's
 arms; *[Kisses her.]*

Do'st love me still, ha'st not forgot me jade?

Ele. In forgetting thee, my Harry, I shou'd
 Forget myself! forget indeed to breathe!
 For thee I live; thou art my dearest half,
 O! how cou'd I bear this life without thee?

Rich. My honour'd father!

John. My long lost parent!

440

Hen.

HENRY THE SECOND. 19

Hen. Rise honest Dick, how fares it my good John?

Thy father's blessings light upon ye both:—

[Embraces them.]

Now let's on my Nell, for I lack rest!
And for the morrow's fun that rising will heap
Labours on our head, we'll be prepar'd.
Look Lords, you hold yourselves in readiness,
For 'tis our fix'd intent that we be crown'd
On the morrow, by twelve, at Westminster;
Be this proclaim'd throughout our city!
And see moreover, that every hall
Be stock'd with viands, that so our people
May share with us the joy of such a day.
Thy hand sweet Nell! come! my Sons, let's on.
[Exeunt.]

People shout, Drums beat.

SCENE *Westminster Abbey.*

Enter KING HENRY, QUEEN ELEANOR, PRINCE
RICHARD, PRINCE JOHN, THEOBALD,
LEICESTER, CHESTER, MOWBRAY,
LORD DE CLIFFORD, *Earls, Barons,*
Bishops, Heralds, according
to their Dignities.

Hen. I pray thee, Theobald, is there not a
place
Now vacant here, that must ere we proceed
Be fill'd? I mean our seat of Chancellor.

C 2

Theo.

Theo. Why truly noble Sir, there is.

Hen. Then mark me, Theobald. Thou art
worn in years,
And cou'd inform us, where to make our choice,
Wil't please ye, do so?

Theo. Humbly I thank your grace, for singling
me
As fitting, now to offer such a man. 460
One Becket I well know, a goodly clerk,
Whom late for sundry virtues he possess'd,
I did advance unto the dignity
Of mine ARCHDEACON.

Hen. 'Tis enough, bring him before us straight!
If thou do'st know him worthy such a place,
We'll not question further, but single him
To fill our empty seat, bring him before us!

Enter BECKET.

Why, truly, he hath a comely figure!—
And likes me well, thy hand my good Becket. 470
Take thou this place, and henceforth know thy-
self
Our just and true appointed Chancellor.

Beck. What gratitude remains in Becket's
breast,
Shall ever toil to prove his earnest love,
And shew him worthy your present bounty.

Hen. Not unto me thy gratitude thou ow'st,
But unto Theobald here, 'tis he alone
Thou ought'st to thank, therefore I charge thee,
friend,
That which to Cæsar 'longs to Cæsar give. 480
If after, thou'd'st please me, I'll tell thee how!

With

HENRY THE SECOND.

21

With justice, and with truth, thine office fill.
Deal with my people as befits a man,
And more I ask not. Now, let us be crown'd.

[They crown him in form, and all the Nobles hail him by the title of Henry II. King of England.]

Hen. My good Archbishop! prithee tell me
now,
Is it ought save form, or must I wear this?

[Holding his finger up to the Crown.]

Theo. 'Tis but the form, my liege, thus being
crown'd,
You may or wear it, or straight pluck it off.
[He takes it off.]

Hen. Then bear it hence!
'Tis not weighty enough for my beaver,
Neither fits it so easy as my cap;
Bring hither my bonnet!

[They bring it, he puts it on, and rises from his seat.]

My gracious lords! had I not wherewith all
To pay in part, the debt I owe you now,
I ne'er cou'd thus have knelt to take a crown,
And kept the blush of shame from off my cheek;
For on my shoulders you have heap'd a debt,
A mighty debt! a crown and kingdom too!
And for the same, thus have I now to offer—500

[They bring two maps.]

This roll doth shew you England as it stood,
When Harry First, my grandfire, reign'd your
King;

C 3

And

And this poor dwindled map, now marks ye out,
 How your domains did stand in Stephen's time,
 Which now I blush indeed to look upon!
 And thus at once do cancel and make void.

[Throws it to the ground.]

In its place I restore again the first,

[Takes it up and lays it down again.]

And add thereto the whole of Picardy,
 Anjou, and part of fertile Poictiers! 510
 Besides one hundred fourscore thousand marks,
 Which we now place within our treasury.

Theo. My tongue alone shall speak your people's
 thanks.

Additions such as these do counterpoise
 The crown with which you are invested now.

Hen. O wou'd my task were ended here! but
 no, —

A judgment must be utter'd ere we part
 In words so heavy, and so rude in sound,
 As make my very heart indeed to weep.
 Now Leicester! bring hither that self same roll,
 Which late in France we did think meet to pen.

*[Leicester rises from his seat and delivers it,
 then returns to his place again.]*

Though well the seats around us here are fill'd,
 Yet some there are that naked do appear,
 Lacking their noble owners. Where is't?
 What silent all! then by your leaves I'll speak.

[Holds up the Roll which Leicester gives him.]

Herein is catalogued of all our Peers,
 The titles and their separate dignities,

Of

HENRY THE SECOND.

23

Of whom the greater part to us seem true ;
 Yet damned treason hath been meddling here 530
 And smear'd the names of some we tender'd most ;
 Where is Earl Ranulph ? where's the Lord Fitz-
 Hugh ?

Lord John, Lord Owen, and the Lord Fitz Urse,
 Besides some Knights and others of less note,
 That should be present ? Why answer they not ?

Theo. We wou'd, but dare not plead in their
 behalfs.

Hen. Be it made known, the five we here did
 name

Guilty of blackest treason, we pronounce !—
 For, that they did 'gainst me their lawful King,

540

With hell-hatch'd treason, wantonly conspire !
 Aiding the proud ambitious Stephen !
 If one of them within our realm be found,
 On him an hundred marks we will bestow,
 That, or alive or dead, brings him before us ;
 As for the rest, that rather were drawn in,
 (For that their betters led them on the way.)
 Our gracious pardon unto such we grant !
 But we shall tent them close ; if they do flinch,
 Why then they look for mercy but in death ! 550
 Now let the drum and trumpet speak our joy,
 The rest be feasting, mirth and revelry.

*[Takes Eleanor's hand, they retire in the
 order in which they entered.]*

*A Chamber.**Enter BECKET alone.*

Beck. The child that hath enough, will mowl
for more.

We from the cradle then are still the same,
Eager to climb ambition's golden tree,
Looking but upward to the topmost branch;
Nor thinking once, if back we wou'd return,
That we the boughs have bent, and broken so,
That there is but to go on and gain the point,
Or headlong we must totter down again. 560
How set my robes now I am Chancellor?
Why well! yet some there are that envy me,
And will do much to pluck them from my back!
Am I then firm? is ev'ry bough beneath
Unbent, unbroken? I wou'd they were so!
But I to mine own use have placed monies
That 'long not unto me, but to the King.
That's the branch I so hard have borne upon!
'Tis there! I cannot answer to the charge;
What matters it? I still am with my Prince, 570
The cherish'd and unrival'd favourite!
By holy church, I do defy them all!
And thou intruding Mowbray, have a care!
Busy Lord Clifford, look thou to thyself!
Or at one blow, I will cut short your buds!
Then as the flower that's pluck'd, I'll leave ye
both
To droop and wither, hang your heads and die.

Enter

Enter SALISBURY.

Whence come you Salisbury?

Salis. From Theobald! ———
Whose age and sickness brings him nigh to death!
580
He fain wou'd on the instant speak with you.

Beck. I'll to him straight!
But tell me whither is the King?

Salis. Himself with Mowbray and the Lord de
Clifford
Are gone to hunt at Woodstock, as I hear.

Beck. Is not the Queen gone thither too?

Salis. No! my lord.

Beck. Depart so soon, and leave fair Ellen
here!
What think'st thou, good Salisbury? Is't not
strange?

Salis. It lieth not in me to 'solve the matter!
590

Beck. At leisure, we'll look further into this—
'Tis not meet to tarry now, so follow me!

[*Exeunt.*

Woodstock

Woodstock Bower.

HENRY and ROSAMOND.

Hen. O, wherefore love, do'st change complexion thus?

I charge thee, I do beseech thee, fear not !
Wer't not that thine eyes are two lustrous stars,
And pierce the knotted bow'rs that enround thee,
Wer't not for those lips breathing perfumes so
sweet,

That men will haunt around this spot to know
Whence such things come, O ! wer't not for all
these, 600

I'd tell thee love, and truly too, thou'rt safe !
And secret from the piercing eye of man.

Rosa. Indeed it were too soon to leave your
Queen !

Your absence will engender in her mind
Some dark suspicion, which may ripen straight,
And bring forth jealousy, despair and rage !
Let not thus your heated blood o'ercome you !
Be rul'd ! 'twere better so for both of us.
I will be thy jailor, love ! and bind thee 610
With softest flow'rs, feed thee with my kisses !
So thou wilt be rul'd by me, my Harry !

Hen. Wou'd I were a God !
That yielding, I might honour more my chains !
I am content, do with me as thou wilt.

A Horn

A Horn sounds without.

That is the signal——'tis Mowbray comes !

Enter MOWBRAY.

Well, Mowbray ! what news ?

Mow. A messenger from Becket is arriv'd !
Who brings sad tidings o'th' good old Theobald.

Hen. Alas ! what of him ? 620

Mow. 'Tis thought, my liege, he'll not live
out the day.

Hen. My good old Friend ! my honest Coun-
fellow,

Must I now lose thee ? must we part so soon ?
To horse then Mowbray ! I'll follow thee.

[Mowbray goes out.]

Adieu, my love ! farewell my Rosamond !

[Kisses her.]

Rosa. That kiss was thine, my Harry, and so
sweet
It seem'd, as it wou'd challenge one of mine !

Hen. Then give it love !

[She kisses him.]

Rosa. Thine ! will I keep so close within my
lips,
A zephyr shall not dare intrude upon't ! 630
When thou return'st, I'll give it back again.

Hen.

Hen. Farewell! adieu!

[*Exit.*

A Chamber.

THEOBALD *on a Bed sleeping.*—BECKET *seated by him.*

Beck. The dying man, that can thus sweetly
sleep,
Must wear a soul within this outward flesh,
That knows no sin—how gently heaves his breast,
All cover'd with the silky snow-white beard;
He smiles as if an angel kiss'd his lips,
And whisper'd him of joys that were to come!
Sweet soul! thou hast an everlasting seat,
A throne in Heav'n above. Cou'd men but
look,
And see a sight like this, they were all blest!
Sin wou'd grow out of date, wou'd be forgot!

Enter HENRY.

Hen. How does the good old man?

BECKET *rises.*

Beck. He sleeps my liege!

Hen. And looks as sweet as any new-born
babe!

[*Henry sits in Becket's place.*

Methinks

Methinks the register of men's bad acts
Bears not one stain from any deed of thine ;
And if it did, thou hast been penitent,
And dropp'd so many tears for the offence,
That clean the blot is wash'd away ; O ! joy,
To find that virtue hath so much reward,
As thus to smile even on death himself ;
That angel, who ranks first in Heav'n above,
Can only tell thy happiness to come ;
For such a place it is that thou must fill.
Soft ! he moves, my good old heart, how fares
it ?

Theo. What ! my King, my sovereign here ; I
am Sir,

As one that from a gentle sleep awakes 660
To bid farewell to those on earth he loves ;
And lay his soul upon the lap of peace,
Until 'tis nurs'd into eternal bliss.
To you, I have a faithful servant been,
And toil'd these many years ; but now 'tis past,
If ought I at your hands have merited,
I fain wou'd crave a boon, ere I go hence.

Hen. Thou hast it. Tell it I beseech thee.

Theo. Invest good Becket, with those dignities
That straight I shall give up unto your Grace. 670

Hen. By holy thorn ! I swear it shall be done.

Theo. Approach me, Becket. I have been thy
friend !

Then take a friend's last council—There's thy
King !

Above him sits enthron'd a greater still ;
Whilst on this earth thou can'st thy Prince obey,
And charge thy inward conscience with no sin,

Do

30 HENRY THE SECOND.

Do it I charge thee; he will esteem thee for't,
Men will bleſs thee for't, God will ſave thee
for't,

Thus have I done.—But, oh! beware of pride,
For thou waſt nothing, art grown into pow'r.
If thou doſt find ambition ſtir within, 680
Look back to what thou waſt, and be content;
Remember this, and then thou art moſt happy.

Beck. I ſhall Sir.

Theo. I wou'd my liege, a little more with you,
But no! I cannot—O! Heav'n! Heaven!

[*Dies.*

Hen. Yet ſtay awhile—'Tis done—all's over.
This body late poſſeſs'd with faculties,
How motionleſs! thoſe lips that mov'd but now,
To utter muſic ſuch as angels do,
Quite ſtill! one little ſigh bore hence his ſoul 690
Into the higheſt heav'n!—Come ſorrow!
For as I preſs this hand, my tears ſhall flow,
Bearing like company with my kiſſes.

Beck. Adieu; my friend! my Theobald!

The King riſes from the Bed.

Hen. The care of his interment ſhall be thine!
As owing moſt thou beſt can'ſt honour him.

Beck. I ſhall ſee it done my liege.

Hen. Follow me now, for I wou'd ſpeak with
thee.

Looking back to the Bed.

Farewel, my Theobald! farewel for ever.

[*Exeunt.*

Enter

Enter QUEEN ELEANOR.

Ele. Is't that my looks are channel'd with old
age,
My body crook'd, or that my mind's grown
sour?

Am I Queen Ellen, Harry's lawful wife?
Why yes! and yet it should seem 'twere not so,
Where lies my offence? am I barren? No.—
Have I then borne but women children? Yes!
Men I have brought forth! what wills he more?
Wherefore shou'd he thus leave me, I know not;
And in sooth I must sit calmly down
And weep his absence; were this the woman?
No; I'll chase him home, by Heav'n I will.

Enter PRINCE RICHARD.

Well, my Richard, where hast been my son?

Rich. I parted now with John de Salisbury,
Who did instruct me of sad tidings.

Ele. What sayest thou?

Rich. Theobald, that good old man, alas!
is dead.

Ele. Then peace to his departed soul.

Enter

Enter PRINCE JOHN.

John. I will not speak of what thou know'st already.

Ele. I from thy brother heard the heavy news!
But tell me who dost think will fill his place?

Rich. Our chancellor the goodly Becket.

John. So have I heard, by desire of Theobald,
Who dying did request it of our father. 726

Ele. Thy father, sayd'st thou?

John. Yes.

Ele. Hath he then been to London?

John. Aye, and is ere this at Woodstock.

Ele. Leave me awhile! —

[*Exeunt the Princes.*

What! hither come; return'd too, and not see me!

For dying Theobald thou cou'd'st quit thy sport,
And leave the chase; but for me! 'twere too much!

O! 'tis some other pastime takes thee hence,
But it shall cost thee dear! By Heav'ns! it shall,
I am a woman! have a woman's mind! 730

Tenderly can love, can hate, and revenge,
And will do so, cost what it may—

Now let me see, what it were best to do!

Becket! in this methinks, might serve me well!

I can my sons command, I ord Leicester too!

And have a voice, which can in France do much!

I will about it, and raise such a storm,

Will need a greater still, than he, to quell.

Enter

Enter JOHN DE SALISBURY.

Speak ! art thou not Salisbury, Becket's friend ?

Salis. Yes, an' please your highness. 740

Ele. Then tell me, where is he ?

Salis. With Theobald who lays now at Westminster.

Ele. 'Tis well, I will unto him there.

[*Exit Queen.*]

Salis. How wrapt she seem'd in thought ! what can it mean ?——

And said that she wou'd unto Becket straight !

'Tis jealousy, that stirs within her breast.

Alas ! poor Queen ! indeed, I pity thee !

And thou too Becket, my good lord and master,

For thee I fear, for thee in silence weep ;

Thou'rt but a man, art frail, hast many faults ;

Cou'd I but lull the busy thought within,

Or stop these words that play upon my tongue,

Still crying out——

Thy fortunes Becket, will prove thy ruin.

Cou'd I do this, I then were happy ; but no !

Awake, or in my dreams 'tis still the same ;

There's something more in this than phantasy ;

Yes ! 'tis curst pride, that will undo thee !

I know thee but too well ; thou hast a mind

Wou'd lord a world, and think that world too
small : 760

Will Harry bear all this ? Impossible !

D

The

The whole sum'd up, brings it to this at last ;
 Becket must fall ! but he will greatly fall —
 I'll labour to stop this, tho' much I dread
 My labours will both vain and fruitless prove.

[Exit.

A Chamber.

On a Table many Papers.

BECKET.

Chancellor ! Archbishop !—but one step more,—
 Rome's holy crown ! and then I am content.
 That is my aim—That's the throne I'd fill !
 More I cannot ! less I would not stoop to.
 Now for the means—Will gold do this ? why aye ;

And what will gold not do ? Do'st want a friend ?
 Gold will buy thee one ! Do'st lack esteem ?
 Lend but thine ore to all, and thou wilt gain it.
 Would'st cut thy neighbour's throat ? gold will
 do that ;

Would'st drink, wou'd'st game, wou'd'st wench,
 'twill do all these,

Nay and much more too—then it shall serve me,
 As it hath done others, and make me soon,
 That which on earth I seek—No less than Pope.
 These letters to my secret friends in Rome
 Shall be dispatch'd and with them as much coin,

780
 Besides

HENRY THE SECOND.

35

Besides good items of what more will follow,
As shall make them most excellent miners.
But hold! here comes the Queen.

Enter ELEANOR.

Ele. How fares our good Archbishop.

Beck. A little sad, or so! an't please your Grace.
For that I have for ever lost my friend!

Ele. Griev'st thou for thy friend! what then
shou'd I do?

Losing at once a King, a friend, a husband?
Tell me, thou holy man, is it a sin
To rave, to curse and seek revenge for this!

Beck. Lady, this thou shou'd'st bear and be
content.

Wou'd'st thou to quench thy thirst, drink of the
sea?

Or would'st fuel add to quench the fire?
'Twere better thou did'st so! than comfort me
With words so tame! I will not heed thy coun-
cil!

Beck. Beseech you, hear me madam!

Ele. Instruct me to raise hell, I'll listen then!
Or tell me tales of those that have been wrong'd,
And for a term of years have borne it here!

[*Pointing to her heart.*

Feeding the mind with thoughts of sweet revenge!
Do this, and I will swallow up thy words,
As greedily as wolf his panting prey.

Beck. I know thee wrong'd, and know how hard
it is

To bear such wrongs, and bid the mind be still !
Yet be not over rash my gentle Queen !
For though revenge be sweet, still there is yet,
A sting more poignant far,—Silent contempt !

Ele. But that I cannot put on ! for my heart
Wou'd burst, were I to suffer such neglect, 810
And not proclaim it to mens ears, with voice
Of thunder's self, that all at once cries out,
Revenge and justice !
Whatsoe'er thou wou'd'st, I'll do it for thee ;
So thou'lt but walk with me in this affair.
But now thou art in dignity so high,
With me it rests not to aid thee further !

Beck. Hold, madam ! you can still do much !

Ele. 'Tis then with thee to ask, and I shall
grant ! 820

Speak ! say what is't !

Beck. Say ! wou'd your highness condescend to
write——

Ele. I will do any thing.

Beck. Thus then it is ;—I wou'd make friends
at Rome,
And if your Grace, by letters from your hand,
Wou'd deign speak well of me, it might do
much,
In clearing of the way for my succession.

Ele. I understand thee well !—It shall be done.

Beck. Then I am thine, and bound in honour
to you !

Ele. Richard and John my sons, are both with
us !

The

HENRY THE SECOND.

37

The Irish to our aid will be prepar'd ;
 France too, I warrant me, shall not be still ;
 Upon the weakness of our sex the King relies.
 But I shall teach him what a woman is,
 When flighted in her love ! Becket, farewell !
 We shall meet again ere long.——

[Goes out.

Beck. What have I said ? stay madam ! nay,
 she's gone !——

Am I not leagu'd to stir rebellion ?
 Monstrous ! to what hath my ambition led me ?
 Why Theobald, grins thy spirit at me thus ? 840
 Look not so ghastly, O ! thou good old man !
 Prate not thy dying lesson in mine ears,
 Left swift as thunderbolt it strike me dead !
 Whither is Theobald flown ? e'en up to Heaven !
 Could he but look down, ere that life's heat hath
 Left his body cold, and see his councils
 Trodden under foot, contemned, despised.
 That thought it is, doth set my brain quite mad !

Enter SALISBURY.

BECKET starts.

What art thou ? Heav'ns how I do tremble !
 'Tis but good John, my worthy Salisbury !

Salis. How fares it Sir ?

Beck. Why well, very well !

Salis. Nay say not so, my lord, your looks are
 pale,

At your eyes portal stands a wav'ring tear,

D 2

Wou'd

Wou'd fain burst forth! ———

But your great soul wills it not—O! speak Sir!

Beck. Thou art truth, thou art honesty itself!
Get thee away, thou must not rest with me.

Salis. If, as you say, I am true and honest, 860
Then why bereave me of both these virtues?

Beck. Speak thy meaning, I understand thee
not!

Salis. As owing you my fortune and my means,
I in return owe truth and honesty!

Were I to leave you, then shou'd I lose both.

Beck. Thou quite unman'st me!—How I do
play the fool!

[*Becket weeps.*]

Tell me where's that Breakspeare of whom thou
spok'st?

Salis. He waits your pleasure!

Beck. Call him hither.

Enter BREAKSPEARE.

From John de Salisbury I have heard of thee!
Much hast thou wrote, and art a learned clerk!
Wou'd'st enter into my service?

Break. My lord, most willingly! and shall be
proud,
In obeying one so goodly as yourself.

Beck. Wou'd'st thou bear letters from me hence
to Rome?

Break. That were a task I doubly shou'd desire,
First, as in doing it, I serve your grace;
And secondly, that I wou'd journey thither!

Beck.

HENRY THE SECOND. 39

Beck. Go then, prepare thyself, and on the
morrow

The packets shall be ready, fare thee well!

Ereack. My lord, I humbly take my leave.

Woodstock.

A Room in the Palace.

MOWBRAY and CLIFFORD meeting.

Cliff. Good morrow, to thee.

What think'st thou Mowbray, mounts not
Becket well?

Mow. Aye, marry!

As from blind fortune he wou'd pluck the crown,
And leave her nothing further to bestow.

Cliff. Indeed; he has all he can aspire to!

Mow. Nay, believe it not.

Cliff. Is't possible, he will desire more?

Mow. Aye! and like the greedy dog i'th' fable,
May lose the substance, catching at the shade.

880

Thought cannot reach at what he wou'd aspire.

Cliff. Nothing less than e'en the crown itself!
For being Chancellor and Archbishop,
He occupies at once two dignities;
Bear hard upon the very rank of king!

Mow. Wou'd'st thou believe't, he'd fain be
POPE OF ROME!

D 4

Cliff.

Cliff. I scarce can think it, where did'st hear this?

Mow. 'That have I learned, and still much more;

When Chancellor, the king did lend him monies,

Of which he yet hath render'd no account, 890
And now to gain him voices for the popedom,
He hath been lavish of the public stock,
And this to Henry shall I soon unfold.

Cliff. Do't then, with speed, I pray thee, for ere long,

The king intends to hold a parliament,
In the which he will propose sundry laws,
Appertaining much unto the clergy.

Becket to these, I know will ne'er agree;
'Tis then the King may tax him with these frauds,
He can, nor answer, nor resist the charge, 900
Which will in Harry much displeasure raise,
And in the end, may prove his overthrow.

Mow. It is well thought! thy counsel I shall follow.

Where is the king?

Cliff. With Rosamond, my daughter, at the bower!

Hither he will return, ere night advance.

Mow. Wil't to my chamber? let us there confer,

That we the better may secure our purpose.

Cliff. Aye, prithee let's away!

*The Bower.*HENRY and ROSAMOND *sitting.*

Hen. As the fond mother bending o'er her
child, 910
Longing doth sit, and wish to kiss its lips,
Yet dares not wake it from all gentle sleep : —
Or, as the drowsy soldier on the watch,
Hearing some distant buz, doth list'ning stand,
Fast rivetting his eyes upon the spot,
From whence such noise proceeds, I, even so
Can sit and look on thee, my fairest Rose,
Striving in vain to number o'er thy charms;
And when my task I think well nigh compleat,
One smile doth add so many beauties more 920
That I my labour must begin anew.

Rosa. And for thy pains, sweet love! I kiss thy
lips,
Hang round thy neck, tell thee how Venus lov'd,
And yet ne'er lov'd so true as I do thee.
Sweet nature! was to thee most bountiful,
Not framing thee alone a perfect man,
But stealing the quintessence of each virtue,
That she might make thee keeper of them all!
Yes! to men's eyes thou art a lovely casket,
But cou'd they view the store that is within, 930
Thine outward form wou'd then appear a blot;
For courage, wisdom, charity are thine!
And when thou did'st first see thy Rosamond,
Love pluck'd his burning heart from out his
breast,

Cleft

Cleft it in twain, then gave to each of us,
An equal share ! Was it not so, my Harry ?

Hen. Yes, sweet love ! but Venus too was
busy,

And whilst she did bedeck thee with her charms,
Was pleas'd so with the work, that she ne'er
thought

How she herself had stripp'd, giving thee all !
As I kiss thee, methinks sweet love himself
Sits on thy front, and waves thy silv'ry hair !
As jealous he wou'd keep me from the theft,
Yet he ne'er thinks how ev'ry gentle touch,
From these his filken whips, make it more sweet ;
For gliding o'er my lips, they do distil
Thick golden odours to the taste, as sweet,
As sleepy dove's eye to the love sick heart.

94

Rosa. Then with mine hair I'll weave thee such
an heart

95

Which thou shalt carry in thy bosom sweet.
As a true token of thy Rosamond's.

[*Distant sound of an horn.*

Hen. But soft ! the distant horn doth chide
For this my too long absence ! I must away,
And thereby stop suspicion : farewell, love !

[*Kisses her.*

Rosa. Nay, Harry, I must with thee, through
the bower,
And when we part, these eyes shall follow love,
And mock themselves with airy sight of thee ;
Returning, I will stop and say, 'twas here

96

I hung

HENRY THE SECOND. 43

I hung upon his robe ! 'twas here I kifs'd him !
Then anxious wait my love's, my lord's return.

Woodstock Palace.

Enter HENRY and MOWBRAY.

Hen. Now we're alone, what wou'd'st thou with
us ?

Mow. 'Tis touching Becket, Sir, that I wou'd
speak !

Hen. Well ! Mowbray, what of him ?

Mow. I wou'd 'twere less, than that I shall
make known ;
Most vilely he doth wrong your Grace.

Hen. Have a care ! I do believe thee honest,
And think thou'st a tongue ne'er stoop'd to false-
hood !

I wou'd forgive that man, who spoke me truth,
Though he stood charg'd with foulest murder ;
But I wou'd spurn that soul wou'd tell a lie,
Tho' dearer to me e'en than life itself ;
For 'tis of sins the meanest, the most vile !
Beware of malice ; thus far I warn thee !
And now proceed.

Mow. Weigh well my words, I do beseech your
Grace !

For shou'd I speak more than truth, tho' it be
In the uttering of one syllable,
Spurn me to foot ! call me base liar !
This will I bear from you, my royal sir !

Hen.

Hen. To thy purpose then.

Mow. When Chancellor, you lent Becket monies !

Hen. I did.

Mow. And think those monies well applied ?

Hen. I do believe so !

Mow. Fore God ! then I do pledge myself
they are not. 990

And as I speak the truth, so may I answer !

Hen. Ha'st ought else to add unto the charge ?

Mow. I have much more, and much worse too,
my lord.

He hath drawn largely, from your treasury !

Hen. And to what end do this ?——

Mow. Tho' great my liege ! he wou'd be
greater !

Hen. What ; aims he at our power then ?

Mow. Not so ; but fain wou'd be Rome's holy
king !

Hen. How ! say you, Pope of Rome ! 1000

Mow. I have said it, Sir !

Hen. And thou shal't answer it.

Mow. Most willingly my liege.

Enter LORD DE CLIFFORD.

Hen. My good Lord Clifford, knows he ought
of this ?

Mow. He doth my liege !

Hen.

HENRY THE SECOND.

45

Hen. Well! be silent both I charge ye.

Both. We swear it Sir!

Hen. Mowbray! thou must hence to London!
We would at Clarendon meet all our lords,
And look I charge ye, Becket fail us not! 1010

[Takes a paper from his pocket.]

This order bearing our royal signet,
Shall command their attendance! make good
speed,

And remember that, thou hast to answer.

Mow. Fear me not; Sir, good health unto your
grace! *[Goes out.]*

Hen. The like to thee, farewell! My Lord
Clifford,
See all be ready for our journey hence,
And look you wake us, by five i'the morning.

Cliff. I shall my liege!

Hen. See that our favourite mettled steed,
Be saddled early. Farewel! 1020

Cliff. Sweet rest unto your grace!

London.

A Chamber.

Enter ELEANOR and RICHARD.

Ele. How wears the time, hath it yet gone
twelve?

Rich. Sweet mother, no! but it bears hard
upon.

I war-

46 HENRY THE SECOND.

I warrant me, they will not fail their time ;
O, here comes John, my brother !

Ele. Bring'st thou any tidings ?

John. Lord Leicester, and Lord Hugh will
soon be here !

Ele. Aye ! and Becket our Archbishop too.

Rich. What ! is he then with us, who is't did
this ? 1030

Ele. 'Twas I ! and were it not nobly done ?

Rich. Aye ! truly, but how did'st compass it ?

Ele. Ask me not here, I'll tell thee more at
leisure.

Enter LEICESTER and CHESTER.

Well ! good Leicester, how many are we strong ?

Leic. For mine own part, I muster full two
thousand,

And Lord Hugh Chester here, as many more.

John. My brother Richard, and myself com-
mand,

At least five thousand able fighting men.

Ireland shall send us full three thousand more !

Enter a Servant.

Serv. A messenger without 1040
Wou'd speak unto your grace.

Ele. Then shew him to our presence !

[*Exit Servant.*

Enter

Enter Messenger.

Whence come you Sir?

Mess. From William King of Scotland,—
Who with these letters greets your highness.

Ele. Go, get refreshment, and rest awhile!

[Messenger goes out.]

(Opens the packet.) Well, Lords! here is news
indeed!

By this I learn, Scotland is with us too.

'Twas I who stirr'd William our brother to this!

Ches. I wou'd you had done the like by Mow-
bray; 1050

For he's in battle, a most valiant knight.

Leic. That were impossible! since with Henry,
He still remains the firm and steady friend.

Ele. So let him! we count thrice Harry's
number,

Besides, our troops are all prepar'd for war,
Whilst yet the King knows nothing of our aim.

How I do burn to shew him that I've done.

To make his stubborn, never bending knee

Kiss the bare ground, and for my pardon sue;

That were revenge indeed, revenge most sweet!

Enter

Enter BECKET.

Why art thou thus tardy, my Lord Archbishop?
1060

Beck. Most gracious Queen! I humbly do beseech,
That as I've well resolv'd this business,
You'll no further urge me, to act therein.

Ele. Why how now Becket?

Beck. Good Queen! my conscience wills it so.

Ele. Hold! I wou'd a word in private with you.
[*Takes him aside.*]

When I to Rome did LETTERS write, I then
Did on thy piety and goodly deeds enlarge,
And gave thee virtues scarce to man belong'd.
Most patiently thy conscience bore all this;
Now in sooth thou hast receiv'd thine earnest,
1070

And like a cunning clerk would'st prate of conscience,

But I will all confess unto the King!
That he may know thee for an hypocrite,
This will I do, if thou remain not firm.

Beck. Think but a while how much the King
hath serv'd me!
How many favours he hath heap'd upon me;
Beseech you, lady, let me hence away!

Ele. Thou knowest my sentence! do as thou wilt.

Beck. Madam, I am yours! and must bow consent.

Ele. Why so 'tis best.

1080
Enter

Enter a Servant.

Serv. Roger Mowbray wou'd speak unto your Grace.

Beck. Bring him unto us.

Enter MOWBRAY.

Mow. At Clarendon, the King wou'd see you
Lords ;
As he doth purpose there a Parliament :
He begs your Grace moreover will not fail.

Beck. We shall meet him there.—

Mow. Here is the order bearing his signet,
[*Takes out the paper which the King gave him.*]
Which he bade me safe deliver to your hands.
Mine errand thus fulfill'd, I take my leave.

Leic. Yet hold ! good Mowbray, 1090
Thou art most true and faithful to the King.

Mow. And hope, my lord, I ne'er shall prove
other.

Leic. He doth but ill requite thy pains.

Mow. I think not so, for I have one reward
O'ertops all that majesty can bestow ;
'Tis greater far than title, riches, power ;
The mind's content—in honouring my King,
And loving my country, I gain all this,
What wou'd you more ? Malice or treason

E

Alike

Alike I defy——

1100

My unstain'd soul shall wait death's direful blow,
And set but once to rise again for ever.

Leic. Mowbray, farewell!

Mow. Health to you all.

[Goes out.

Ele. We'll change his note, I warrant!

Beck. I must follow him, for I have letters,
Which I wou'd that Mowbray bear unto the
King!

Ele. Thou art with us.

Beck. Most truly, so.

[Goes out.

Rich. Now then, prepare we for the parliament!

John. And then for war——

1110

Rich. Leicester, assemble all your troops,
And with Earl Hugh, march on to Clarendon,
Ere night, myself and John shall overtake you.

Leic. & Ches. Fare ye well!

Rich. See, brother, the like be done by our
men;

And tell Earl Robert, we'll appoint the halt
At our next meeting; speed thee to do this!

John. I shall attend to it straight.

[Goes out.

Rich. Sweet mother, thou wilt after us.

Ele. The loss of life alone, shall plead excuse.

Rich. 'Till next we meet farewell!

1120

Ele. Farewel! my gentle Richard.

SCENE.

SCENE.

A Hall at Clarendon.

KING, LORDS, ARCHBISHOP OF YORK, and
BECKET, with Bishops assembled.

Parchments, &c. laying on the table.

Hen. Though we our clergy much esteem, my
lords,
Our People are still most dear unto us :
We cannot therefore pass such crying deeds,
As late in violation of our laws,
We find our beadsmen have been charged withal ;
Drunkenness, gluttony, bloody murders,
Have partially been judg'd and pardon'd.
I therefore have thought meet to form an act,
Purporting to try the sins of churchmen, 1130
Not by theirs, but by the laws of the land.
As next to us in power, we call on you,
Our lord of Canterbury, to sign this !

*[Becket goes to the table and seemingly reads over
the parchment.]*

Beck. My liege, I dare not, for 'twou'd curb
the rights,
And weaken much the laws of holy church.

Hen. If holy be thy laws, why suffer they
Such bold, such impudent, such daring crimes

To pass unpunished, in the sight of God.
 The greatest of my peers for murder dies ;
 But you so wink at practises most vile,
 That they do fit you easy as your robes ;
 Tell me ! who gave ye these privileges ?

Beck. God's minister elect, the Pope of Rome !

Hen. I shame to hear thee speak thus ! why
 dost think

The hand of God wou'd sanction deeds like
 these ?

Beck. From him the Pope receives his holy
 trust,

Whate'er he doth ordain, comes from above ;
 Therefore I will not to this act subscribe.

Hen. Proud upstart man ! but I will hold a
 awhile. 1150

My Lord of York, and you my bishops here,
 Wilt please ye, set your signets to this deed ?

York. For mine own part, most willingly !

*Archbishop of York and all the Bishops
 sign the deed.*

*Becket rises, and calls for the Seal of Chan-
 cellor, then going up to the table, throws
 it down.*

Beck. There, Sir ! take back your seal of Chan-
 cellor,
 Bestow it elsewhere ! I will no more on't.

Hen. But with it render me the sums I lent
 thee.

Beck. You never lent me ought.

Hen. Did'st not borrow of me four hundred
 marks ?

Beck.

HENRY THE SECOND.

53

Beck. Sir, you did give them to me!

Hen. By holy thorn! but thou shal't pay me
straight,

1160

Or else away to prison for't.

Beck. I am thy confessor, thy ghostly father!
Shou'd son e'er seek to crush his father?

Again I tell thee king! I'd rather die,
Than lessen in one point, my churches rights.

Hen. Proud, insolent clerk! as such thou
dost speak;

But I will check thy pride, ere I do leave thee.
Thou hast dealt freely with our treasury—

Beck. 'Tis false! by holy church, 'tis false. 1170

Hen. Mowbray, where art thou? stand now to
thy charge.

Mowbray rises from his seat.

Mow. Here, my liege, and to his teeth I tell
him,

He hath made free with thirty thousand marks!
And let him now deny it if he dare——

BECKET rises in a passion.

Beck. Take thou the lie! and wer't not for
my priesthood,
I wou'd against the charge defend myself,
With sword in hand, and make thy life answer it.

Mow. To thy soul again proud priest I give
the lie,
And say thou hast done that, and e'en much more!
Bring thine accounts, nay! prithee, start not thus.

E 3

Beck.

Beck. Vile insect! peace, I spurn thee.

Mow. Wou'd thou wer't other than thou art,
proud priest.

Mowbray going towards Becket enraged.

KING rises.

Hen. Sit! Mowbray, I charge thee sit.

Mow. O! such usage; my liege!—

Hen. Peace! I say.

Mow. I crave your highness pardon, for those
words

Were harsh enough to stir a coward's blood;
Yet I will obey, my lord.—

[Sits down.]

Hen. Wilt thou thy signet set hereto?

Beck. I dare not!—

Hen. Pay quickly then, that which thou ow'st
me.

Beck. Were it a just debt, Sire, I lack the
means.

Hen. Hie thee to prison then! and may thy
pride

Still bear thee up, and keep thee company.—

Art thou so stubborn and so hard of heart,

That we two, cannot dwell in this our land.

Tell me proud Clerk? must I lord it o'er thee,

Or is it great Becket's will, that I shou'd kneel,

And learn obedience? Insolent vain man!

Beck. I wou'd not Sir, you stoop'd unto my
will!

But wou'd, that you were govern'd by my coun-
cil.

As

HENRY THE SECOND. 55

As confessor, I know thy hidden sins.

Hen. I'll bear no longer—Without there, my guard!—

Leic. Hold! I will pay that he owes to you Sire!

Hen. Then do so, and I shall mark thee for it!
Beneath this shew of liberality,
Sure something lurks! Is man thus kind to man,
And without cause? the world runs not so smooth.

Break up the council! Mowbray, follow me:
But look to thyself, my good Lord Leicester.

[They all follow the King except Lord Leicester and Becket.]

Leic. My lord Archbishop, whither go you, now?

Beck. I shall with speed towards Canterbury.

Leic. And I to join the Queen and Princes.

Beck. Then bear to her this message, I pray thee!

Wer't not that now the king did threaten me,
Call'd me liar, and 'fore mine enemies,
Stain'd my honour, and used vile words withal,
I ne'er my vow of secrecy had broke,
But to be treated thus, I will not bear;
As holy confessor unto the King!
I can the cause of this neglect make known,
The Lord de Clifford's daughter, Rosamond;
'Tis she that fills the seat in Harry's heart;
And robs fair Ellen of her husband's love.

Leic. This is indeed, most base, but where dwells she?

E 4

Beck.

Beck. Nigh Woodstock palace stands a secret bower,

The which, with so much art and skill is form'd,
That it defies the cunning of man's search!
For tho' you'd seem to pace it o'er and o'er,
You still return unto the self same spot,
By which you enter'd; known is the secret
Only to Mowbray and her father, Lord de Clif-
ford.

Leic. I shall with speed, relate this to the Queen;

And much she will applaud thee for this news.
Farewel! my lord.

Beck. My love go with thee too, farewell!
Cou'd I mine eyes turn inward to my soul,
They'd find it care-worn, sick, nay, very sick!
My glory fades, my triumph's at an end.
I wish'd for more, yet greater shall not be:
A summons here bids me prepare for death!
O! 'tis a dreadful call, when our account
In Heav'n's great register, stands blotted.
A punishment, but for a time to bear
Were nothing, but to be for ever curst
To all eternity, 'tis horrible!
No end, no distant time, that one may say,
Thus much, and 'tis o'er, then am I happy!
But no! we must to never-ending fires;
Or chance, be plac'd beneath the thrones of those
That blest are, and say within thyself,
Thus might I have been! 'tis a madning thought!
'Tis on this earth to me a very hell!—
I'll in, to Heaven breathe a fervent prayer!
Seek peace and comfort, for 'tis only there!

A Chamber.

Enter SIR REGINALD BERISON, SIR HUGH MORE-
VELE, SIR WM. TRACY, and SIR
RICHARD BRYTO.

Sir Hugh to Sir Reginald.

Did'st not mark the King?

Sir Reg. He seem'd in wrath-----

Sir Rich. Rather say he was so, and with just
cause.

Sir Wm. Wou'd I had been Harry! when so
proudly

He did give up the seal of Chancellor—

His life thou'd scarce have satisfied my rage.

Sir Reg. Heard'st thou that, the King did say
but now?

Sir Hugh. I'll tell it—On entering his chamber,
He sat him down, and frowning leant on's hand;
The scarlet dye that flush'd upon his cheek,
Became all palid, then turn'd to red again.
Twice Mowbray did address him, but in vain;
No longer able to restrain his wrath,
In rage he thus burst forth—By holy thorn!
Is it not pity that no one present,
(For many here do call themselves my friends!)
Will here stand forth, and rid me of this man,
This haughty clerk, this insolent proud priest.—
More he said not, but leaning on his hand,
Again turn'd silent, and seem'd lost in thought!

Sir

Sir Rich. Shall we then prove his friends, and do this deed?

Where is Becket now?

Sir Reg. Gone hence to Canterbury——

Sir Rich. There let him stay—are we all agreed?

Sir Hugh. Aye, if he sign not to the king's act!

Sir Rich. Then let's away! arm ourselves and follow him.

All. Agreed!

A Chamber.

Enter ELEANOR and LEICESTER.

Ele. At Woodstock Bower, sayd'st thou?

Leic. Madam, I did.

Ele. For this, I thank thee Becket.

Patience avaunt! I will no more of thee.

Was I before a tigress in revenge?

I now am worse than tongue to ear can tell;

For I can act such things—but no matter,

Were this same Rosamond cas'd round with flint,

My nails, the rugged substance shou'd tear off,

Rend forth the heart from out her strumpet breast,

Then smiling tell the king, 'twas I that did it!

Leic. Madam, beware how you proceed in this, Cunning and art will better serve your purpose.

Ele. Where is the Lord de Clifford now?

Leic. At Woodstock, as I guess.

Ele. How say you?

Did he not attend the parliament?

Leic.

HENRY THE SECOND. 59

Leic. He did ; but ere the council was broke
up,

At Clarendon he took horse, and left us.

Ele. Went Mowbray thither too ?

Leic. No, he rested with the king.

Ele. Alone ! why then 'tis just as I wou'd have
it ;

I must away ; do you unto my sons,
Tell them ere time hath worn three days compleat,
I shall again be with them.—Fare thee well !

S C E N E—*Canterbury Cathedral.*

BECKET comes slowly forward seeming thoughtful.

Man hath his day of joy and misery !
How short the one, how lasting is the other !
With me the first is long blown o'er, and now
The second comes, to mock my tortur'd soul,
With idiot laughter, ringing to mine ears
My loss of power, my faded glory —
This overpeering front ! that bore a sun
Outshone the girdled brow of majesty,
Now clouded, dim, and pale. O ! I am sick.
Tush ! tush ! the sleep of death will cure all
thoughts :

And yet, must this my wholesome goodly flesh
Rot, and serve to feed the crawling earth-worm,
Who nothing favours but of dust and clay ;—
I tremble at the thought, and e'en but now—
They wind about my flesh, and to the feel
Are damp, and cold, as that same horrid sweat,
Which frets from out the front of dying man !
Yet it must be so, death will have his due,

The

The worm will feast his fill, and man must rot—
 Thus much for the body corruptible!
 As for the soul!—I wou'd, but cannot speak,
 And were I, all wou'd be conjectural,——
 My account wou'd stand as clear at the last,
 As now, that I have nothing uttered.

Enter JOHN DE SALISBURY.

Salis. Letters from the Queen, my lord!

Beck. Take them hence!——

I'll stir no more in this rebellion.

Salis. How say you, Sir! Rebellion?

Beck. I have spoke too much, yet what matters it?

Yes! Salisbury, I am that godly man,
 Who have repay'd the bounty of his Prince
 With damned treason—O! curs'd ambition,
 To thee! I long ago have sold my peace,
 And now my life must answer for the fault.
 Now what think you, Sir? I am a traitor!
 And worse! for I have broke my oath to God,
 Told to mens ears, those secrets which the King
 Did breathe to me his ghostly confessor——
 O! I am a poor wretched, lost, lost man.

Salis. And yet you are my gracious master still—

Beck. Leave me! I prithee leave me.

Salis. O turn not thus from thy true Salisbury!
 I will not quit, but hang upon this robe,
 Till you look down upon your once lov'd friend!
 This out-stretch'd hand, which fain wou'd bid me
 hence,

Thus let me kiss! and its unkindness shame.

Beck. Can'st thou then look upon me with
 pity?

HENRY THE SECOND. 61

Is thy good heart so soft that it doth melt
Like snow-drop, thus to behold my greatness?
Which once did shine as bright as mid-day sun,
But now! is set for ever. O! can'st thou
Weep so fast, and for a poor fall'n man!

Salis. I have a memory of what is past;
Can view my present state, and that it was,
Can say here is the man, hath done all this!
Hath cloath'd and fed me, been to me a father!
This self same man doth fall, and shall not I
Remember such things were, and stoop to save
him?

O! yes, and give up fortune, life, nay all.

[Kneels to Becket, who embraces him.]

Beck. I did not think such virtue dwelt on
earth;

No more! I'll weep upon my present woes;
For they have taught me what a man may be,
Who keeps his conscience clear, and free from sin.
They have instructed me, that here below,
The friend you have in high prosperity,
May in adversity, prove still the same.
Yes! for my Salisbury is yet most true,
Had I been alway great, I ne'er had known this.
Now let us to prayer! ———

*Enter Priests, bearing the chalice and crozier, with
others following, clad in white, they go
up to the altar, BECKET and
SALISBURY follow.*

Enter a MONK in seeming haste.

Monk. Fly! fly! save yourself my Lord Arch-
bishop ———

[Becket turning from the steps of the altar.]
Beck.

62 HENRY THE SECOND.

Beck. What means this ?

Monk. Four Knights, all arm'd ! are seeking for
your Grace,
They rail'd against you, and did mutter threats ;
On questioning their errand, they answer'd,
We come from Henry ! to seek a traitor.—
Beseech you, away my lord, and save yourself.

Beck. 'Tis done ! my time is come, and I
must die ;
I feel, I know it, and am prepar'd.

Salis. You shall, you must away, my lord.

[*Tries to force him out.*]

Beck. Off with your hands ! I love thee Sa-
lisbury—
And wou'd not quit thee, with an angry thought.
For thy zeal, my thanks ! but all is vain,
My lamp is out !—Weep not ! we soon shall meet.
Our souls will join again, in heav'n for ever.

Enter the four Knights.

Sir Reg. Where is Becket ? Where is the traitor ?

Beck. Hold ! I answer to the name of Becket,
But not to that of traitor : your will Sirs,
And how dare ye thus my church profane !
Your bodies cas'd in rude and warlike steel,
Your caps lock'd on your brows, your beavers
down,

Which shou'd be off, in such a holy place,
A house of peace, and not a field of battle !

Sir Hugh. We stand not upon ceremony.

Beck. 'Twere better Sirs you did ! who are ye ?

Sir Hugh. We from insulted majesty are come,
To know if thou unto his act will sign ?

Beck.

Beck. Then briefly I reply, I will not——
'Twou'd weaken much the pow'r of holy church,
So get ye hence! and bear this answer back;
Or rather (for well I know your errand)
Compleat your work, (*he smiles in contempt*) 'twill
do ye honour Sirs.

Sir Hugh. Dar'st thou to mock us with rude
contempt?
'Twere better thou did'st sooth us with fair words.

Beck. Peace! I say—What! I sooth, I flatter ye,
Know ye my station, Sirs, and who I am?
Thomas, holy Lord of Canterbury!
The King and I, or Becket and Henry,
Are but the self-same thing.

Sir Reg. Hear ye this?

Salis. For heavens grace, Sir, do not thus urge
them.

Beck. Your ear, Sirs! I meant not to lisp my
words,
An 'twill please ye! I shall again rehearse:——
Yet wherefore waste my speech upon such things?
Were ye true men, you'd shew your faces bare,
But now ye come to act a damned deed,
And shrink to let men peep upon your looks;
But know! there is an eye can pierce that steel,
A mighty hand! will crush the guilty soul,
A righteous God! to judge the murderer.

Sir Hugh. And to condemn thee, traitor which
thou art!

Beck. Were I elsewhere than in this fainted
place,
Tho' clad but as I am, in these thin robes,
I wou'd against ye all oppose myself,
Wou'd singly crush those arms ye but disgrace,
And to perdition downward hurl your souls.——

Sir

Sir Reg. I'll bear no more! that for thy words—
Strikes at him with his sword, Salisbury
holds out his arm, and receives the blow,
the Priests all affrighted, retire, except
Salisbury. Becket tries to wrench a
sword out of one of their hands.

Beck. Why now! ye show yourselves, but I'll
 grapple.

Another Knight behind strikes him on the head.

Sir Hugh. Thy labour is but vain, have at thee!—
Becket falls with one knee on the step of the
altar, Salisbury holds him up, kneeling
by him.

Beck. O God! and thou Saint Denis! at whose
 shrine

I now receive the all-dread blow of death,—
 To thee, I offer up my parting soul.

[They strike him again.]

Beck. Again a blow!

[Strikes again.]

And now another!—O Salisbury!

Take me to thine arms, I die a martyr—

O Lord! all merciful! forgive my sins!

'Tis done! my God forgives, he pardons me.

And thus, thus, my soul flies up to heaven! *[Dies.]*

Salis. Amen! amen! my noble master.

Sir Hugh. Now we have done the deed, let's
 unto his house,

Seal up his goods, then onward to the King!

Come then! about it straight. *[Exeunt.]*

The Monks enter in Procession, and sing a Requiem to
solemn Music.

SCENE

SCENE *changes to a Chamber in the Palace, London.*

HENRY and MOWBRAY.

Hen. How say you, Mowbray?

Mow. Your people of the North, are all in arms,

And headed are, by Ellen and your sons.

Hen. How many are they strong?

Mow. Full nine thousand! and secretly I learn William the Scottish King is with them join'd, Who to their number adds six thousand more:— They fear not, but loudly do defy you!

Hen. My wife! my sons! all leagu'd at once against me!

Was ever curse, upon a parent's head,
Pour'd down with so much vengeance as on mine?

Why toils the father for his infant child?
Since he but warms a snake to sting his peace;
At once, 'twere better population ceas'd,
Than stock the world with beings such as these.
I cou'd now o'erturn this wide expanse,
Change the general face of all creation,
Making the world a second chaos!

Wishing I were unborn!—what must be done?

Mow. 'Twere better we make head against them.

Hen. What numbers have we?

Mow. Near seven thousand!

Hen. The odds are great against us then.

Mow. Even so, Sir.

Hen. Where is that proud, that haughty Becket?

Mow. He left the parliament for Canterbury.

F

Enter

Enter a Servant.

Serv. One in seeming haste wou'd speak unto
your Grace !

Hen. Shew him before us !

Enter one of Becket's Gentlemen.

Hen. Whence come you Sir ?

Gent. From Canterbury.

Hen. From Becket ! I suppose,
Well, Sir ! What news from him ?

Gent. Alas ! I come, and most unwillingly,
To say, my lord and master's murder'd.

Hen. How ! murder'd—Who hath done this
vile deed ?

Gent. Four knights, my lord, belonging to the
court.

They did moreover say, 'twas by your will.

Hen. How ! but they shall justly answer for it.

Mow. Right well I know those that have
done this act ;

At Clarendon, you left the parliament,
And in much choler, some words did 'scape you,
That scarce were utter'd, but you did repent ;
Yet from those items, hath this deed been done.

Hen. O ! this, this is the very curse of kings !
If we but nod, that nod must be obey'd ;
And though we only have the thought of sin,
Yet are there many that furround the throne,
Who to gain love and favour of their Prince,
Will nourish and ripen such sinful thoughts,
'Till in the soul, they take a lasting root,
And in the end seal us for destruction.

Mow.

HENRY THE SECOND. 67

Mow. 'Twere fit, my Prince, you think on
your safety.

Hen. Where lies the enemy?

Mow. They come to meet us in Northumber-
land.

Hen. On then! and march we our men thither
too!

They aid, with mighty numbers a bad cause.
Ours is stronger, 'tis upheld by justice.

[*Exeunt.*]

SCENE.

Distant View of Alnwick, in Northumberland.

Enter PRINCE RICHARD, JOHN, and HENRY,
WILLIAM KING OF SCOTS, HUGH EARL
OF CHESTER, ROBERT EARL OF
LEICESTER, and Army.
Drums beating.

Rich. Halt! Thus far have we march'd,
crown'd with success,
No siege, no battle yet, hath worn our troops,
No garrison hath dar'd to stop our course,
But all obediently have ope'd their gates,
And friendly been unto us. Tell me now!
How call you this place?

Leic. They name it Alnwick.

Rich. Encamp we here, this ground doth like
us well;

Have yet our scouts brought tidings of the King?

Ches. Yea, good Prince, he marches slowly hi-
ther.

F 2

Rich.

Rich. What power brings he?

Ches. Scarce seven thousand men.

Rich. So few! why sure he sleeps, but we'll rouse him.

Tell me noble William! do'st not think so?

Wm. From our Scot's horn we'll an alarum sound,

Shall stir his sluggard soul, I warrant me.

Thrice hath thy father batter'd down my arms,

Degraded and dishonour'd me, but now!

The time is come, that I shall mock in turn.

[*Drums beat.*]

Enter QUEEN ELEANOR.

Ele. My sons, my noblemen! how fare ye all!
This is a joyful and a seemly fight.

Rich. Here is the hardy William, King of Scots,

Who, with his power did join us yesternight.

Ele. Welcome our brother, welcome unto us.

Rich. Heard'st thou, by the way, of noble Becket?

Ele. Too much I fear, unwelcome is the news!
Oh! my gentle Richard, alas! he's slain.

Rich. Where, and by whom?

Ele. Four knights, dispatch'd by Harry, as I hear,

Murder'd him, i'th' Church at Canterbury.

Rich. Deed most foul! yet shall it to us prove fair.

Just Heav'n will crown our arms with victory,
Making us instruments of their vengeance.

But where's thy rival? where is Rosamond?

Ele. No matter! —

She ne'er again will cross me in my love.

Rich.

HENRY THE SECOND. 69

Rich. Have you imprison'd her, is she then safe?

Ele. Aye! if death can make her so.

Rich. O mother, mother! this is too much—

Ele. I came not hither to seek thy counsel.

Rich. 'Twere better madam, had you so done.

Ele. No more, Sir! she's poison'd, and I'm content.

Go! prate thy counsel to the howling winds;
They, not I, may chance listen to thy moan;
Or rather, go weep with Lord de Clifford—
Thoult find him i'the camp, chain'd and my prisoner.

[*A trumpet sounds.*]

Enter MOWBRAY, with a Herald.

Your errand, Sir?

Mow. I come, with gracious offers from the King;

If it so please you, grant a hearing.

Ele. Proceed, Sir!

Mow. He will'd, that thrice his herald shou'd sound forth,

Ere I made known to you my embassy.

[*Herald sounds three times.*]

Henry the Second, just King of England,
Doth here arraign Richard, John, and Harry,
The lawful sons and heirs of his body,
With Eleanor, their mother; also
Earl Robert, and Hugh Earl of Chester,
With others here not nam'd, guilty of high treason!

But shou'd they now confess their rebellion,
Dismiss their followers, and sue for mercy,
To all, save only William of Scotland,
Most graciously his pardon he doth grant.

If stubborn, ye chance refuse this offer,
 No tie of blood will soften his vengeance;
 The yearnings of a parent will be hush'd.—
 Nor shew the mercy of a conqueror.

Ele. Go! bear this answer back unto the king;
 We spurn his offer, and defy his rage.—
 From us, a speech like this, had founded well.
 We from thy master, did expect fair words,
 Not threats like these.—Begone! you know our
 will.

Mow. Wou'd ye, that I bear this answer back?

Ele. Aye! and take good heed you soften not
 the phrase.

Leic. (*Scoffingly.*) Good Mowbray, gentle
 Mowbray, fare thee well!

Mow. My lord! a word with you.

[*Leicester goes to him.*]

When I do jeer, Sir, 'tis not with my tongue;
 This is the instrument which I do use.

[*Putting his hand on his sword.*]

And this the arm, that works it, do'st hear me?

[*Holds up his right hand.*]

I shall in fight, 'gainst thee oppose myself,
 'Tis there I'll answer this your mockery,
 And deal so roughly with your lordship's crest,
 That were my lady's monkey in the field,
 He'd maul and make a plaything of your bear,
 And wrench from out his paw, the ragged staff.
 Such a crest suits well an apish bearer;
 Flout not good my lord! I ne'er do flatter.

Leic. So, Sir, it shou'd seem —

[*Attempts to draw his sword.*]

Mow. Hold! my Lord, I am a blunt English-
 man,

And in that title, boast an unstain'd soul,
 A hand, that ne'er hath grip'd a rebel sword,

But

HENRY THE SECOND.

71

But always borne the steel 'gainst such as thee,
Enemies of our true anointed King.
Though I wou'd fain chastise that perjur'd heart,
And teach thee what it is to wear a soul,
That only lives to guard its country's rights;
Yet by your leave! a lady claims respect.

[Bows to the Queen.

Farewel! to-morrow i'th' field we'll meet,
Then remember, or one, or both must fall.

[Goes out.

Leic. I do accept the challenge.

Ele. Come, sirs! I pray you now let's in and rest.

By times to-morrow, we'll attack the King;
Therefore good night, and peace be with you all.

All. Sweet Queen, farewell!

[Drums beat.

KING HENRY'S Camp.

Enter HENRY and MOWBRAY.

Hen. They wou'd not listen to my terms!

Mow. They did refuse, and spurn'd your offer.

Hen. Saw'st thou the Scottish King?

Mow. Aye! my lord.

Hen. Well! see my arms be laid within my tent,
And then get thee to rest.

[Mowbray kneels.

Mow. Yet ere I go, thus on my bended knee
I wou'd intreat a favour of your Grace.

Hen. Then ask! I am not want to deny thee.

Mow. So please it then, that you permit me
Sire,

To range my troops 'gainst those of Lord Leicester.

F 4

Hen.

Hen. Thy boon is granted! so good night.

[*Mowbray rises.*]

Mow. Thank your grace! now fly thou creeping night,

And let bright day light me to victory.

May gentlest sleep attend your highness' couch.

[*Goes out.*]

Hen. Why fare thee well, and to thy wish, amen!

Yet amen! will not close these care-worn eyes,

Nor lull this troubled soul, for one short hour,

Within thy arms, Oh! sleep, thou nurse of care!

What avails my sceptre, ball, nay crown itself?

All will not purchase soft and sweet repose!

The wretch who toils throughout the sun's bright course,

Tho' he be stretch'd upon the flinty rock,

And lies not further from its lofty brink,

Than half his body's length, e'en such a man,

Thou'lt hug, altho' the roaring sea itself

Conjoin, to make the spot more horrible!

The peasant labours for his daily food,

And hourly sweats from bodily fatigue:

But O! how different stands the case with me!

I for a nation toil, and if I sin,

Millions of souls rain curses on my head.

I see it now! the man whom fortune woos,

Will ne'er be woo'd by thee! Wherefore is it?

That now the curse of Heav'n roars against me,

Louder and hotter, than 'tis wont to do!

I ne'er kill'd my father, deny'd my God!

Yet doth my own flesh seek to destroy me.

Is it, O Lord! that I am worse in sin?

Or that the deeds of my forefathers gone,

Are reckon'd up, and I am singled out

To answer all? Yet be it as it may,

Do not suffer O merciful Father!

That I, to-morrow, in the broil of war,

Shou'd

HENRY THE SECOND. 73

Shou'd strike my flesh, and spill my children's
blood.

My life be forfeit, and not theirs O Lord!
I'll in, and wear away this dismal night
In pray'r, and offering tears of penitence.

A Field.

Soldiers fighting, Drums beating, &c.

Enter MOWBRAY.

Mow. Already is the field one sea of blood!
Which thrice I have o'er trod, yet find him not.
Shou'd this day's fight be ended ere we meet,
I shall grow sick, in very grief of heart.

Enter LEICESTER in haste.

Leic. Come forth! and face me, where art thou
Mowbray?

Mow. Here! here! and for this fight, I thank
thee, Mars!
Now breast to breast, and steel to steel oppos'd,
Thus fight we, 'till of one the life be clos'd!

They fight, Mowbray beats off Leicester.

Enter WILLIAM KING OF SCOTS.

Flourish of Drums, &c.

Wm. Whither shall I fly? triumphant Harry!
Like that same lion blazon'd on his shield,
Roars death to us and to our host! curs'd hour!
That I shou'd live again to grace his vict'ry!

Enter

Enter KING HENRY, with his Helmet on.

Hen. Beshrew me, now ! but I do know thee well !
And long have fought thee ! Thou'rt the Scottish King !
Then turn thy sword where it shall honour reap,
If it prove victor ! I am King Henry !
Thou'rt my equal—A king against a king,
O glorious thought ! thus ! thus ! have at thee then !

[They fight, King of Scots flies.]

Enter PRINCE RICHARD, with his Beaver down.

Thou fliest ! and haply for thee, here is one,
Who like thy guardian angel, lights on earth,
To stay that death, which else wou'd have been thine.

[Harry and Richard fight, then pause.]

Hen. Stand aloof ! thou art in fight, so passing hot !

That I cou'd almost stamp thee for my blood.

Rich. Why pause ye Sir ? come on again !

Hen. Yet hold ! I wou'd thy beaver were unlock'd,

That I might view thy face. A deadly sweat
Pours down my feverish limbs, when thus I raise
My steel against thy breast—I will no more.

Rich. Then thou art my prisoner.

Hen. Nay, first I will uncase, and shew myself,

If

HENRY THE SECOND. 75

If then thou know'st me not, we'll to't again,
And shou'd I slay thee, thou wilt nobly die!

[Turning up his beaver.

For Henry of England is thy rival!

*Richard drops his sword, kneels, and takes
his father round the knees.*

Rich. Gracious gods!—my father!

Hen. O! say, art not Richard, my eldest born?

[Richard raises his beaver.

Rich. I was, I was, but am no longer so!

For I have rebell'd against my parent;
I am unnatural, have broke those bonds,
Which in a child, shou'd strengthen with his years;
O never, never more!——

Can I make peace with God, or thee my fire.

Hen. Rise, my son; from me thou hast forgiveness.

[Embraces him.

But remember, thy God must pardon too.

*[Shouting without, victory! victory! King
Henry hath gain'd the day.*

Hen. This shout doth hail me master of the field;

Follow! my child, I will unto my tent,
And offer thanks to God; come, cheer thee up.

[Exeunt.

KING

KING HENRY'S Tent.

HENRY seated on a chair of state, QUEEN ELLEN,
 PRINCES JOHN, HENRY and RICHARD,
 HUGH OF CHESTER, ROBERT OF
 LEICESTER, and WILLIAM
 KING OF SCOTLAND, in
 chains, Prisoners with
 Guards, &c.

Drums and Trumpets sound.

Hen. Let yon rude clamor cease! now tell me,
 Sirs,
 And you, our once lov'd queen, that gave them
 birth:

Why have ye dar'd to stain my peaceful land,
 And drench my fertile plains in English blood?
 Have ye forgot your duty to your God,
 And can ye thus upon a parent dare to look,
 Who gave you being!
 Oh shame, shame! thus to league with foul re-
 bellion.

John. (*The other Princes kneel.*) Forgive! O,
 pardon us, gentle father,
 The crime lies with our mother, not with us.

Ele. Spare thy tongue the labour of recital,
 I do confess it, and glory in the deed.

Enter MOWBRAY and LORD DE CLIFFORD.

Hen. Good Heav'ns! Lord Clifford, how cam'st
 thou here?

Ele.

HENRY THE SECOND, 77

Ele. His tears may stop the current of his speech;

Thus! then it is. 'Twas I brought him hither,
'Twas I poison'd his daughter, thy mistress!
And 'twas revenge! that urg'd me to this deed.

Hen. Poison'd!—What, my Rosamond dead!

Mow. My liege, 'tis most true.

The noble Clifford here, hath told me all.

Hen. For this deed, may'st thou stand for aye
abhorr'd.

My Rose gone for ever! The sweetest flow'r
That e'er did kiss the bosom of the wind,
Or spread its fragrance to the May-morn sun!
Abandon'd woman—— [To the Queen.

Bear her from my sight, lead her to prison,
There let her pass the remnant of her days,
In penitence and pray'r.—Bear her hence, I say.—
[Guards lead her out.

And lead Earl Robert and Hugh Chester, straight
To execution—See, Mowbray, it be done.

[Mowbray leads out Chester and Leicester.

And as the crime most foul was not your own,
To you my sons, Richard, John, and Harry,
I here my pardon and forgiveness grant;
But for that ambitious King of Scots,
We hold him pris'ner, until he pay us
Ten thousand marks, for ransom of his person.
See therefore, that he be strictly guarded.
Now we'll to Woodstock, take one last farewell,
Ere that my Rosamond be laid in earth;
Then cross the seas for France, where, as I hear,
They fain again wou'd seize on Normandy,
And curb our lion's glory.

F I N I S.

EPILOGUE.

IF from our Play returning to your homes,
Ye chance to read this story as 'tis writ;
And find our Harry cross the seas for France,
Our Becket unto Rome for succour fly,
Thence unto Louis' court to meet his king;
Where friends ye find, this haughty priest once
more

Invited home unto his dignities.
When this ye read, do not your author blame;
He cou'd not bear ye on swift lightning's wing,
O'er billowing seas, deserts and gay towns;
Or shew within the compass of one hour,
The business of a twenty summer's course;
Yet shou'd ye frown, look back upon his Play,
And let our Harry's courage and sweet love,
Forgiveness beg for his o'erleaping time.
Our haughty and ambitious Becket too,
Shall plead the lack of place: Yet after all,
Shou'd any present still remain unkind,
And carry with him to his nightly couch,
The frown of discontent; O, shou'd this be;
Then think how much the writer here hath toil'd
To please, and shew in this our Harry's reign,
The pride and glory of our English land,
The unstain'd thunder of our regal lion;
No brow so rough, but sure will smooth at this,
No frown so black, but will to sweetness turn,
And bright as sun when bursting from the East,
Drive night away.—Yet why intreat ye thus?
No more! no more! ye smile and look so sweet,
I'll to our young and trembling author say,
Ye heard, ye smil'd, and did applaud his Play.

MS.
RELIGIO CLERICI,

A

CHURCHMAN'S EPISTLE.

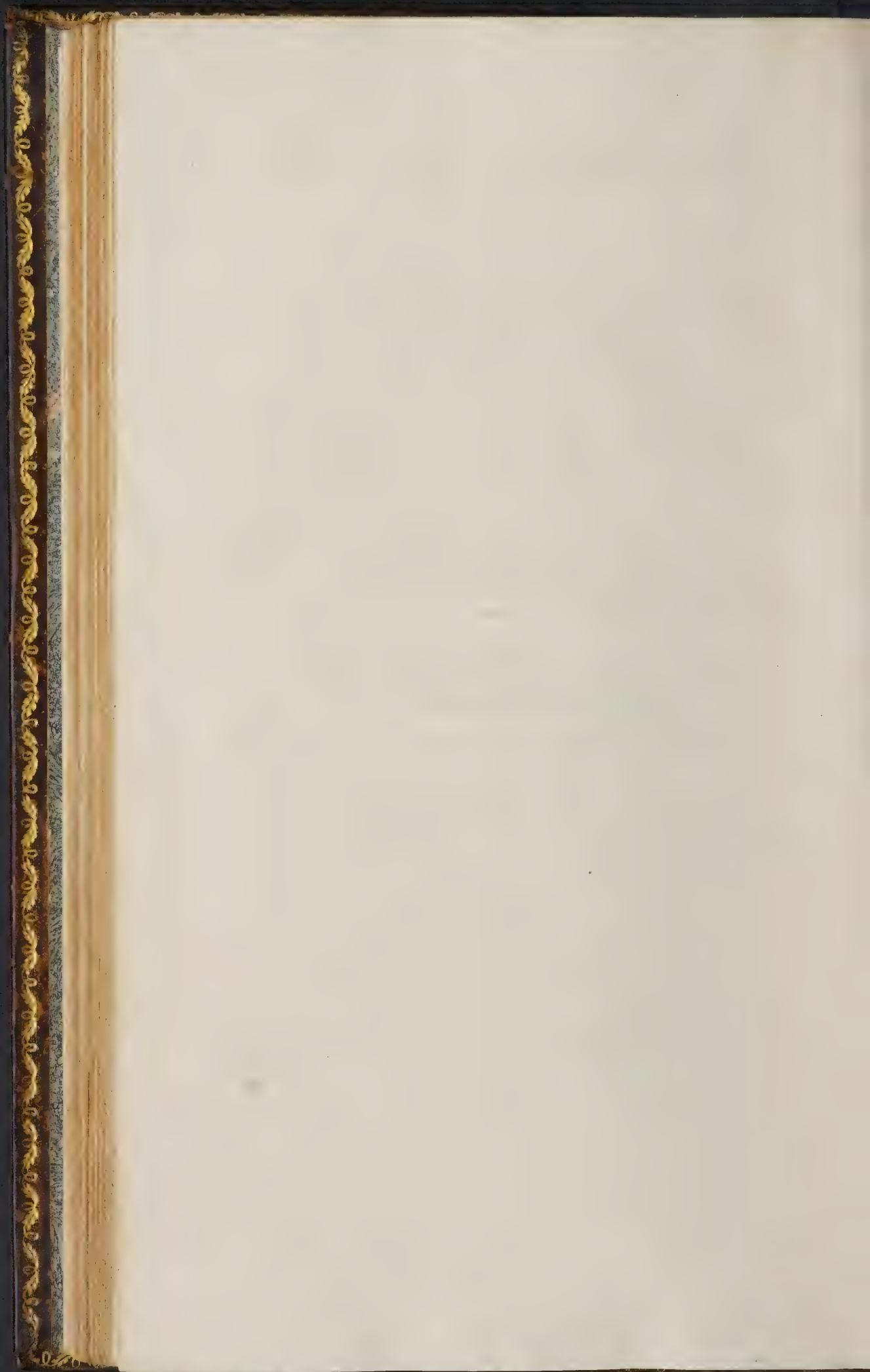
" 'Tis too much prov'd, that with devotion's visage,
And pious action, we do sugar o'er
The devil himself."

HAMLET, *Act III. Scene I.*

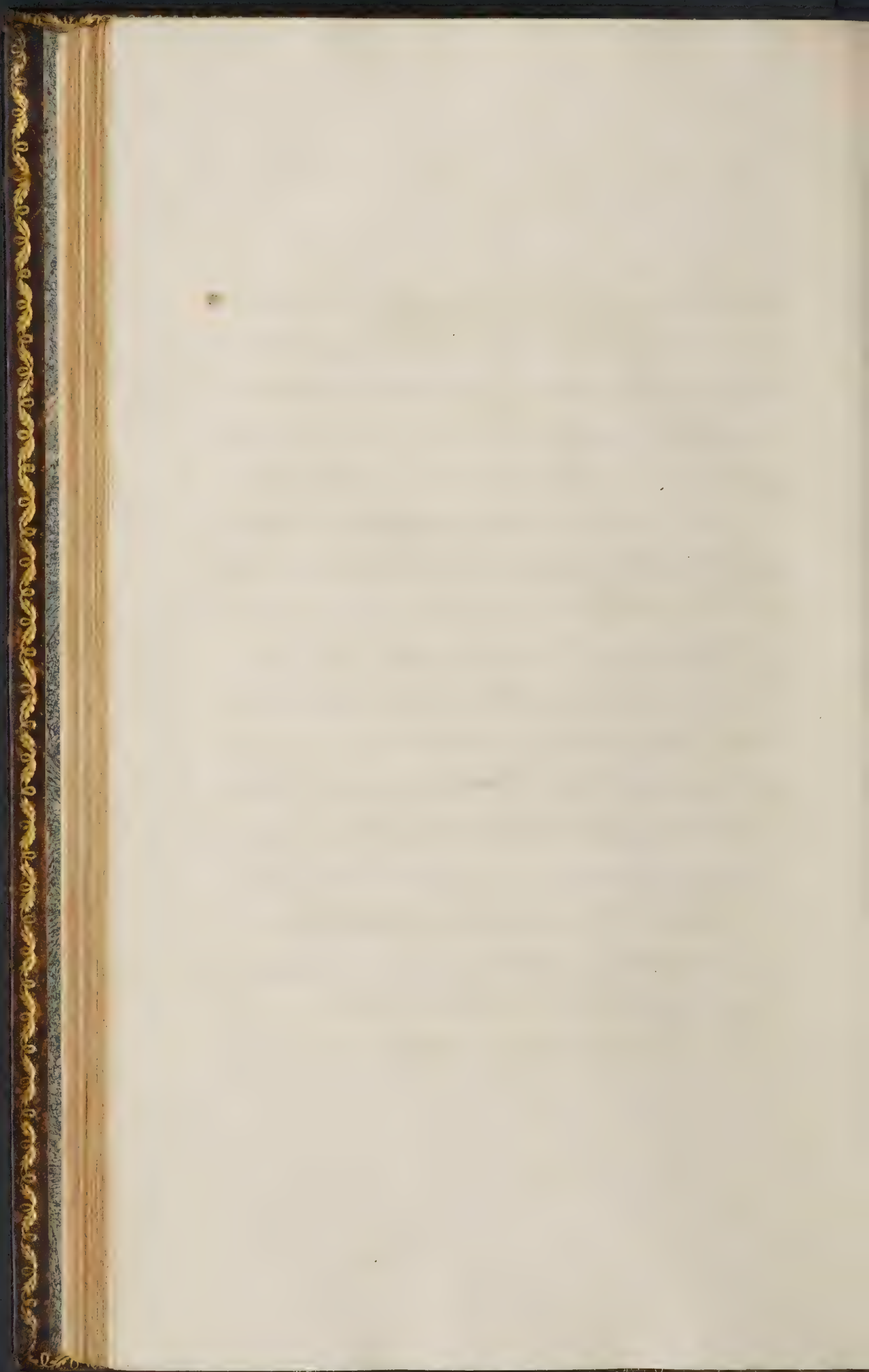
LONDON:

JOHN MURRAY, ALBEMARLE-STREET.

1818.



THE Author of the following lines has purposely chosen the most obvious arguments in favour of Revealed Religion. He claims no farther originality therefore for the first part of his poem, than as it contains the genuine answers which suggested themselves to his own mind in reply to the question, "Why are you a Church of England Christian?" Many more and many better reasons might doubtless be given, but perhaps not so much to his purpose. In the latter part he has thought it his duty to express firmly, though he hopes not uncharitably, his opinion of the perils to which the Established Church is exposed by the rapid progress of modern Puritanism.



RELIGIO CLERICI.

You ask me how, in these our canting times,
A Parson dares be thought a man of rhymes?
How Grace and Pagan inspiration fit,
Or things divine with toys of human wit?
You say the Kirk, with puritanic frown,
Stripp'd her one Poet of his scanty gown¹;
And evil eyes on careless Churchill fell,
Not that he liv'd too ill, but wrote too well.

True all you urge; but still, in wisdom's spite,
Unlucky nature forces me to write. 10
Turn where I will, the officious Muse is near,
And verse, unbidden, warbles in mine ear.

Even when in sober prose I would begin
To yield some reason of my hope within,
Grave truths to measur'd strains themselves convert,
And I must rhyme—where others would dissert.

Shame to our days, that with degenerate views
Profane and prostitute the suffering Muse,
Curtail her privilege of heavenly birth,
And bar her flight beyond this speck of earth ! 20
Not thus of old, when with unshrinking eyes
She dar'd the full Schechinah in the skies ;
Commun'd above with disembodied thought,
And echoed lessons purer spirits taught.
Her voice, sole herald of the Eternal Mind,
Convey'd His will and nature to mankind :
Her lips with utterance bless'd the raptur'd seer,
And lent the suppliant language Heaven might hear :
Each torch was kindled at a common flame,
And Prophet, Priest, and Poet were the same. 30

Thus too, when darkness in the Gentile skies
Obscur'd the wisdom of the worldly wise;
And blundering sophists, lacking eyes to see,
Denied the blaze of immortality:
If some faint gleam of dim-reflected light
Glanc'd indistinctly on their mental night,
Unheeded died away the ray divine,
Or rested only on the Poet's shrine.
Then, deep within Eleusis' mystic cell,
The trembling novice heard the measure swell: 40
Dwelt with keen ear upon the solemn strain,
Which whisper'd truths unknown to the profane:
Glimmer'd along the misty path which led
To some half-doubted state beyond the dead;
And saw Creation bend before the throne
Of One pure Essence, SELF-SPRUNG, AND ALONE ?.

Shame to our days! Oh, where is He whose hand
The golden gates of Eden could expand?

Where He whose rugged harmony has told³
The faith he deem'd a layman ought to hold? 50
Fled is the genuine Muse, and in her place
A brisk pretender blurts her shameless face:
Fair in her outward cheek, and painted skin;
Foul as Duessa, if you look within⁴.
Caught by some light and meretricious tale,
The full-breath'd town inflates the rhymer's sail;
And as the breeze of fashion round him plays,
Lends, for a season, false and fading bays.
Full slowly grows that never-dying bough,
The laurel meed which binds the Poet's brow: 60
Shadow'd awhile by some obtrusive green,
It strikes its roots most deeply ere 'tis seen;
Fram'd for eternity, by age matures,
And grows more lasting as it more endures.

Then leave, my friend, for you can leave, the song
Whose fumes intoxicate the grosser throng;

And hear these unpretending strains, which teach
Why I believe the doctrines which I preach.

Prove there's a God ! the frantic atheist cries ;
And his heart trembles while his lip denies. 70
Fool ! in thine own conceit ^s so subtle, prove,
First, that you live, and breathe, and speak, and move !
Is't not enough we find within our will
A void no being, save a God, can fill ;
And while some partial lights illumine the soul,
She pants insatiate for the brighter whole ?
Is't not enough a world without we find,
Which Heavenly skill alone could have design'd ;
And hear great Nature's universal cry
Proclaim her source to be Divinity ? 80
If *proof* of God's existence you expect^o,
First ask another, larger intellect ;
This, brief and bounded, never can ascend
To Him no space can limit, time can end.

Who tells the deaf there's thunder on the wind?
Or prates of noonday brightness to the blind?

O'er Nature's work how nice a law presides!
Her world of worlds what goodly music guides!
Seasons and times in measur'd moments run,
Orbs roll on orbs, and sun succeeds to sun; 90
Fresh as in youth revolves the mighty frame,
Unchang'd, though changing; many, but the same.
Turn inward now with curious eye, and scan
The maze of mind, the moral world of man!
See jarring passions toss'd in wild turmoil,
And Reason thrown to appetite a spoil;
Here aspirations Heaven could scarce refine,
There our brute nature lording o'er divine;
Hands which incline, but balance not the beam;
And Vice, or Virtue, ever in extreme: 100
Creation's monarch to himself a slave,
And Man immortal only in the grave!

Mark this array of misery, pain, and sin ;
Think you God made it, or man brought it in ?
If God a chaos such as this could frame,
My Devil and your God are much the same ;
But if from us the hideous rout began,
I seek no farther for the fall of man.

It little matters what from Eden hurl'd—
Figure, or fact ; an apple, or a world. 110
With signs and symbols others may be smitten,
I always read my Bible as 'tis written :
A golden rule from heresy to 'scape,
When some would prove the serpent was an ape ?
Enough for knowledge is in this convey'd,
That God created, and man disobey'd.

Is there no hope ? can nothing then regain
Our former innocence, nor cleanse our stain ?
Has the one taste of that forbidden tree
Lost all that are, and have been, and shall be ? 120

Useless the piety whose hand adorns
With costly wreaths the gilded altar's horns :
Vain the rich pomp of sacrificial show,
Vain all the blood which can from heifers flow :
From purer springs the saving virtue glides,
And God atonement from himself provides ;
His one oblation all our loss supplies,
The cross our altar, Christ our sacrifice !
Bred in this faith, Oh, let it guard me still,
Watch o'er my heart, and regulate my will ! 130
Keep me alike from either false extreme,
The sceptic's torpor, or the zealot's dream !
Let not my stubborn pride refuse to bend
To truths I was not meant to comprehend ;
Nor let the Reason, form'd to be my guide,
To hot-brain'd fancies e'er be misapplied !

So fram'd our holy temple rose on high,
Purg'd from the foulness of the Papal sty.

Faith's living rock its ample base supplied,
And Love and Hope supported either side : 140
Just rules of noblest art adorn'd its face,
Each part was symmetry, the whole was grace.
No glittering front, in gaudy taste design'd,
Conceal'd some rottenness which lurk'd behind :
No dark pollution, in recesses pil'd,
Its ill-according majesty defil'd.
There letter'd priests, with firm, but sober zeal,
Held up the book of life, and broke its seal :
The veil which dimm'd and shadow'd God withdrew,
And pour'd our ark's full glories on the view. 150
Then Nebo bow'd, then stoop'd reluctant Bel,
And prostrate Dagon's broken image fell * ;
Crowds to their Maker's open courts repair,
No more a den of thieves, but house of pray'r.

Fix'd on this rock, for ever might it brave
The floods which threaten, and the winds which rave :
But treacherous arts with baffled force combine,
And those who cannot storm, may undermine.

Skilled in this secret, now the rabble rout
Howls round the pale, and ravages without ; 160
And the sick flock, which daily grows more thin,
Bears witness of some "privy paw" within 9.

Time was, and pity 'tis such times are fled,
When none explained the Scriptures but who read ;
Another rule our wiser moderns teach,
What matters reading ?—They profess to preach.
All are expounders now, and children prate,
Where grey-beard wisdom us'd to hesitate ;
And teening misses, for a day-school prize,
Transpose the types, and mar the prophecies. 170
But little needs there for a Churchman now,
The classic guidance of the birchen bough ;
But little needs there for a Clerk's renown,
The seven long years' probation of the gown,
And the close wooing Science made us pay,
Till Cam or Isis blazon'd us M. A.
Ah ! how unfitting for more saintly ken,
This carnal scholarship of worldly men ¹⁰ !

Why waste our youth on learning, when we see
All knowledge jumps to them, extempore? 180
Each pious 'prentice freely may dispense
Salvation, licens'd now for eighteen-pence;
And should devotion tempt him from his awl,
He'll get his orders, if he gets his call.

With what presumption this empiric tribe
All disagree, and yet must all prescribe!
So body-quacks delude the gaping throng,
Right, but in calling one another wrong¹¹.
Truth is but one, the focus of the mind,
Heat, flame, and radiance, in a point combin'd; 190
But Error, glittering with unsteady blaze,
Splits the diverging beam ten thousand ways.
Each sect, united 'gainst the Church alone,
Deals some specific nostrum of its own;
Varies the mixture and the dose at will,
And shews how many means there are to kill.

On strong digestions one professor tries
Fumes which transport, and gas which mystifies;
Or, for a valetudinarian soul,
Strong cordial drops, which cherish and console; 200
Sermons for them whose weakness needs repose,
And glowing hymns to waken such as doze.
Another gives you, proud to pay his court,
Some Bible-meeting's neatly stitch'd report;
Where, by the doctors cunningly devis'd,
Cases and cures are yearly advertis'd;
Or asks, however low your purse, and spare is,
Your mite to furnish slops for missionaries.

Within some tavern, whose presiding dame
Their worships license to a year's good fame, 210
Where two small chambers into one combine,
Reeking with smoke, and fumes of yester wine,—
Or where at each assize the sessions-hall
Gladdens the county with its law and ball,

Where wretches hear at morn their gibbet doom,
And nymphs at night are waltzing round the room ;
Here, in full cry together blatant, run
A deep-mouth'd pack of every creed, or none.
The motley offspring of a common sire,
Baptists, and Arians, and Seceders dire ; 220
Fierce Independents, whose ambition crost,
Like Satan's, hates the kingdom it has lost ;
Churchmen, who fain would work their church's fall,
And those who never bow'd to church at all ;
Sure of their salvation, such as labour
With most officious pains to save their neighbour ;
The hollow friend, and unsuspected foe,
And all who dare not what they would be, shew.
Here cold Socinus, with his cunning turns,
Swindling salvation from the God he spurns ; 230
There Calvin, haughty with predestin'd stride,
And sullen grin of self-elected pride ;
And last, regardless be they right or wrong,
The fools who always multiply a throng.

Around on cushion'd forms the movers sit,
While barer benches stimulate the pit;
And rang'd aloft, in rich and beauteous store,
Bright eyes rain influence on the crowded floor:
Well knows the Saint how female arts prevail¹²—
Without the ladies, Heaven itself must fail! 240

Now lift the curtain—nothing need be chang'd,
The strings are fasten'd, and the puppets rang'd;
Plann'd are the bows, the pauses, and the starts,
And cast the characters, and conn'd the parts.
First, like the Prologue of some Attic scene,
Rises the chairman, slow, and grave of mien;
Content the plot and persons to unfold,
And bid them see—what soon they shall behold.
Next, strong in limbs, and brawny-knit of frame,
Some stuttering German, with a sounding name, 250
Rumbles, and vomits his unmeaning note,
A wordy flood which struggles in his throat;

A sea of consonants in rugged trim,
Where vowels, thinly scatter'd, sink or swim ¹³.
He tells, what grace the Gentiles shall imbibe,
If they and theirs but largely will subscribe:
How, through their bounty, missions have been sent
To all remoter villages in Kent ¹⁴;
And in the next report he hopes to state,
Whitechapel's self is made regenerate !

260

Unus'd to public speaking and display,
Some modest youth then tries his first essay ;
Smoothly and sweet his honey'd accents flow,
His lips are faltering, and his tone is low ;
His looks ingenuous " gentle Pity " win,
And " gentle Pity " wakes her nearest kin ¹⁵:
The soft contagion strikes the yielding fair,
And doubtful sighs their certain zeal declare ;
Till, as at last the lessening stream subsides,
And the brisk nonsense into nothing glides,

270

Some raptur'd zany claps his hands, and cries,
“ A god again hath taught us from the skies !”

Each has his portion ere the scene be clos'd,
And Peter seconds that which Paul propos'd :
One puts the question, others grant assent,
This names a patron, that a president ;
One hands the poor-man's penny box around,
One chuckles o'er a more substantial pound ;
This votes their holy homage to the fair,
This thanks the landlord, that approves the chair ; 280
The many shout Hosanna to the cause,
And swell the Christian clamour of applause !

Oh ! were this all ! did jugglès such as these
Alone inform us of our sore disease ¹⁶,
Folly, like heady beer, must find a vent,
And heat, we know, by nature will ferment.
But would you see what heavier ills abound,
Walk with a parish priest his daily round.

In yonder garret, whose abode of pain
By four steep flights of winding steps you gain ; 290
Where, on its single hinge, without a bar,
The crazy door for ever stands ajar ;
And to the window's broken frame assign'd,
A rug excludes the light, but not the wind ;
Around bare walls, perhaps once whiten'd, show
All the foul stains which damp and dirt bestow ;
And from the roof 'twere hopeless now to mend,
Unwholesome dews with every shower descend :
There, on his pallet, some poor being thrown,
Watches for death, unheeded and alone ; 300
Without one hand his drooping lids to close,
One breast to pity or partake his woes,
One voice, whose cheering accents might assuage
The griefs of penury, disease, and age ;
Whence should a wretch like this refuse to die ?
What to such lifeless life can be his tie ¹⁷ ?
Long has he learnt—what years like his must lend—
The bitter lesson, Man was not his friend :

Yet other countries may with hope be trod,
And all his burdens rested on his God. 310
Void of offence of dark and deeper hue,
Some natural frailties struck him in review ;
And these, with penitence and faith sincere,
He humbly whisper'd to his Maker's ear.
Yet 'tis not now the fever's flush which speaks
In signs of living flame upon his cheeks ;
'Tis not the bodily disease which ploughs
Convulsive furrows on his throbbing brows.
No ! 'tis the soul's worse agony which tries
His bosom strings, and flashes from his eyes ; 320
And clenches fast his hand, as he would strive
With fancied fiends who drag him down alive.
Some fierce and gloomy zealot has been there,
And clogg'd his feeble spirit with despair ;
With garbled Gospel and perverted text,
And scripture strangely to his turn perplexed,
Chang'd into threats the tidings of great joy,
And taught the Saviour came but to destroy :

Yell'd out perdition in his phrenzied ears,
And made his heart the very hell he fears. 330
Oh! if there yet be time, some balm convey
Ere yet his tortur'd soul shall pass away ;
Heaven will be merciful to faults like thine ;
Think upon God—" He dies, and makes no sign^{18!}"

Next try the pulpit ;—but enough of these,
I'll sketch a portrait which is sure to please :—
Mine be the man whose doctrine pure and sound,
No tropes distract, no metaphors confound ;
So plain, the simplest understand and love,
So just, the wisest cannot but approve : 340
Who with a keen, but nicely judging art,
Steals to the bosom and unlocks the heart ;
And holds a mirror up where each may see
Both what he is, and what he ought to be.
Not his the text which language overpowers,
Like some old sampler border'd round with flowers ;

Where holy truths in measur'd periods shine,
And scripture stares to see itself so fine.
Not his the saintly leer, the well smooth'd band,
And the coy whiteness of a half shewn hand; 350
The lengthen'd tone, the modulated clause,
The dull, unmeaning energy of pause;
The lifted eye, the slyly stolen look,
And all the frauds of preaching without book.
Who never puts his Bible out of joint,
To try his skill on some disputed point;
Nor starts a doubt, to prove he can unravel,
While some his answer catch, but all his cavil.
Christ is his stem, and would we win the skies,
He shews what branches upon Him must rise; 360
No barren faith, uncultur'd into fruit;
No sapless virtue, void of strength and root:
Vain all that either by itself can do,
The Christian moralist must join the two.
He, when he chides, affectionate and mild,
Like some fond parent o'er a truant child,

With mercy tempers every sound of fear,
And wins to penitence the slowest ear.
Yet far less prompt to chasten than console,
Like Hermon's dew, his words refresh the soul ; 370
Quench the parch'd lips of him who burns within,
And slake the fever of remember'd sin.
How must we joy in such a man to find
His life a comment with his faith combin'd !
How pleas'd the bard of Twit'nam would have seen
His sharp-edg'd satire blunted by—a Dean ¹⁹ !

Safe is our Church while such as these remain,
And all my fears, you promise me, are vain ;
Soon may we tell the mouths of Nile—look round ²⁰,
And mark how many such as these are found ! 380
Harder the task to number those unclean
Who leap the pale at once, or crawl between ;
The busy foes each passing hour presents,
To summon Israel to her leaguer'd tents ;

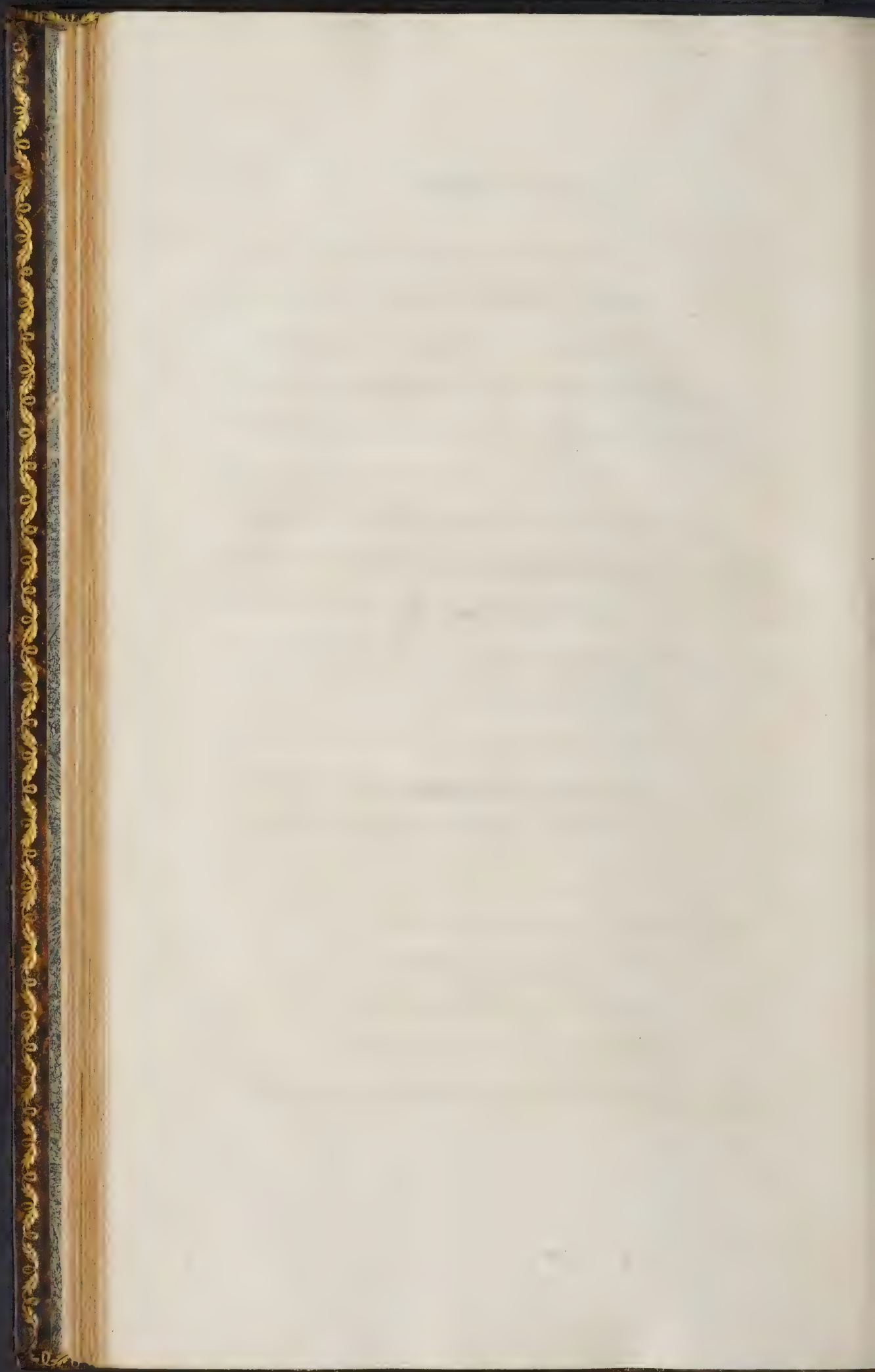
The self-stil'd Serious, who to swell their band
With one new convert, compass sea and land ²¹ ;
Harder to count the beasts who whet their fang
Where'er our vineyard's tempting clusters hang,
Grin round it's venerable fence, and press
To make our Eden one rude wilderness. 390

Not such the visions which in earlier days
The sacred charge I long'd for us'd to raise ;
Not such the dreams you shar'd, for known to you
The tranquil future which my fancy drew,
And all the vivid images of joy
Which throng'd my beating bosom while a boy:
Then for these hours I panted, fram'd my plan
Of after life, and wish'd to be a man.
Methought some village home—like that dear spot
Which held me then—might sometime be my lot ; 400
Free from the din of town, yet not so far
That any friend might fancy it a bar :

My house, a cot—as cottages are now,
Some little glebe for pasture, and a cow;
Hedges of living quick, a yew alcove²²,
Tall elms, bright apples, and a poplar grove.
A smiling country, and a civil squire,
Who thought the labourer worthy of his hire;
Half of my dues without a curse could spare,
Nor storm'd if now and then I kill'd a hare. 410
And when the sabbath's holy feast was spread,
A ready flock, and willing to be fed,
Who lik'd their Parson better than the next,
And not too often carried home my text:
At the church-porch, with frocks and faces clean,
A row to greet me, as I pass'd between;
And bows of rustic courtesy, to tell
They humbly hop'd that Madam too was well:
For by my side I pictur'd one to make
All that I lov'd, more lovely for her sake; 420
One whom my soul was fashion'd to adore;
What Psyche is—I could not picture more.

Such still the lot I covet,—nor repine
If Heaven in wisdom choose not to assign,—
So might I wear away my coming time,
Stain'd with no blacker sins than sins of rhyme;
To wandering sheep the fold of Life display,
Nor, tending others, lose myself the way.
And when mine own green turf above me spread,
Some abler Pastor lays me with the dead, 430
This be my record; “ Sober, not austere,
“ A Churchman, honest to his Church, lies here :
“ Content to tread where wiser feet had trod,
“ He lov'd establish'd modes of serving God,
“ Preach'd from a pulpit rather than a tub,
“ And gave no guinea to a Bible Club.”

NOTES.



NOTES.

Note 1.

THE fate of the author of Douglas is well known. It may be asserted of Churchill, and I fear with too much truth, that his habits were those of extreme profligacy; but his vices would have been forgotten long ago, if his distinguished talents had not kept their memory alive.

“ The evil that men do lives after them,
The good is oft interred with their bones.”

Note 2.

Such was the disclosure of the unity of the Deity made at the Eleusinian mysteries, at least if we believe the fragment preserved by Clemens Alexandrinus and Eusebius to be part of the hymn sung during the celebration of them :

Εἰς δὲ λόγον Θεῖον βλεψας, τούτῳ προσεδρευε,
ἰθύνων κραδῆς νοερον κυτος· εὐ δ' ἐπιβαίνει
ατραπιτου. ΜΟΥΝΟΝ Δ' ΕΣΟΡΑ ΚΟΣΜΟΙΟ ΑΝΑΚΤΑ,
ΕΙΣ Δ' ΕΣΤ', ΑΥΤΟΓΕΝΗΣ, ΕΝΟΣ ΕΚΓΟΝΑ ΠΑΝΤΑ
ΤΕΤΥΚΤΑΙ. κ. τ. λ.

I quote from Warburton (note to book ii. sect. iv. D. L.) to

whom I am perhaps indebted for the first suggestion of the preceding lines.

Note 3.

“ And this unpolish’d rugged verse I chose,
As fittest for discourse, and nearest prose.”

DRYDEN, *Religio Laici*, *ad fin.*

Note 4.

Faerie Queen, Book I. Canto II. St. 40. and Book I. Canto VIII. St. 46, &c.

Note 5.

“ For what man is he that can know the council of God? or who can think what the will of the Lord is? For the thoughts of mortal men are miserable, and our devices are but uncertain. For the corruptible body presseth down the soul, and the earthly tabernacle weigheth down the mind that museth upon many things. And hardly do we find the things that are before us: but the things that are in Heaven who hath searched out?”—*Wisdom of Solomon*, ix. 13—16.

Note 6.

“ Introducitur ecclesiæ asinus animal, sed stolidus, volens caudam aliam, & ampliorem quam natura contulerit, contra naturam sibi inseri.”—*Speculum Stultorum*. MS. Harl. 2422.

Note 7.

If the reader would pursue this truly edifying subject still farther, I must refer him to a work which I do not intend to read myself, a new translation of the Bible by a *Dr.* Clark. (cujus gradus ?)

Note 8.

Whatever these lines may be thought to imply, I am very far from an Iconoclastes at heart. I am afraid to say how much I would give to relodge the saints which the Reformation unniched, particularly as the wisdom of Parliament is now called upon to declare that *image worship* is not *idolatry*.

Note 9.

“ Besides what the grim wolf with privy paw
Daily devours apace.”—*Lycidas*.

Note 10.

The reverend father Petroni, an evangelical personage of the fourteenth century, very nearly produced a most fearful reformation in Boccaccio by arguments of this kind. He had never seen him, but he despatched a brother Carthusian to say that if he did not speedily amend his life and writings, “ qui sont des instrumens dont le diable se sert pour attirer les hommes dans ses pieges, les exciter au peché de la chair, & accélérer la depravation des mœurs,” if he did not re-

nounce "la poesie & les lectures profanes," God had expressly revealed to him, through a vision of his Son, that he (Boccaccio) had but a short time to live, and would be speedily transferred to eternal punishment. Boccaccio was so terrified by this denunciation that in the first impulse of terror he resolved to burn all his books; this, however, was too much for the second thoughts of so hearty a Bibliomaniac, and he wrote to offer his friend Petrarch the refusal of his library. As I have not Petrarch's letters by me, I must give his manly answer in the translation of De Saade, from whom I derive the story. After impugning the reality of the vision, he proceeds as follows: "Je sais par experience combien les lettres humaines peuvent contribuer à donner des notions justes, à rendre un homme eloquent, à perfectionner les mœurs, &, qui plus est, à defendre notre religion. S'il n'est pas permis de lire les poctes & les auteurs payens parce qu'ils ne parlent pas de Jesus Christ, qu'ils ne connoissent pas, à plus forte raison doit il être defendu de lire les heretiques qui combattent sa doctrine? C'est cependant ce qui font avec soin les defenseurs de la foi. Il en est des lettres humaines comme de certains alimens solides qui nourrissent bien un homme qui a l'estomac bon, & fatiguent un estomac foible, qui ne peut pas les digerer. Telle lecture utile & salutaire pour un esprit sain, est un poison pour un esprit foible. Je sais bien qu'on peut se sanctifier sans les lettres; nous en avons plusieurs exemples; mais je sais aussi qu'elles ne sont pas un obstacle à la sainteté, comme on voudroit le faire croire. Il y a plusieurs routes pour arriver au ciel, longues & courtes, claires & obscures, hautes & basses; l'ignorance est la route qui prennent les paresseux; les sciences peuvent produire autant de saints que l'ignorance, & il faut bien se

garder de comparer une devotion ignorante à une pieté éclairée."—*Memoires pour la Vie de Petrarque*, vol. iii. p. 606.

Note 11.

"A cloud indeed of authors, both for their number and the variety of their opinions; the most of them covering rather than discovering the truth (which can be but one), and more to be believed in their confuting others than in proving their own assertions."—PURCHAS. *Pil.* 1. 2.

Note 12.

Human nature is always the same: if Strabo had lived in the nineteenth century he need not have altered the following passage in his 7th book:

Ἀπαντες γὰρ τῆς δεισιδαιμονίας ἀρχηγούς οἰοῦνται τὰς γυναῖ-
κας· αὗται δὲ καὶ τοὺς ἀνδρας προκαλοῦνται πρὸς τὰς ἐπιπλεον
θεραπείας τῶν θένων, καὶ εὐρύτας, καὶ ποτνιασμούς· σπανίον δὲ
εἶτις ἀνὴρ κατ' αὐτὸν ζῶν εὕρισκεται τοιοῦτος.

Note 13.

"Apparent rari nantes in gurgite vasto."

Note 14.

I do not know whether their benevolent exertions have yet extended to the county of Kent, but I myself saw bills pla-

carded on the walls about twelve months since, from “a society for propagating the Gospel in the remote villages of the county of Surry.” My brother poetasters will understand that it is rhyme alone which has led me into this topographical inaccuracy.

Note 15.

Every body knows what “gentle pity” is akin to.

Note 16.

“Atque utinam his potius nugis tota illa dedisset
Tempora sævitæ: claras quibus abstulit urbi,
Illustresque animas impune, & vindice nullo.”

JUV. IV. *ad finem*.

Note 17.

—ως εμοιγ' ο μελλων
Βιος ου βιωτος.

Οιδ. επι Κολωνω. 1689.

Note 18.

Henry VI. Part II.—Death of Cardinal Beaufort.

Note 19.

“To rest the cushion and soft Dean invite,
Who never mentions Hell to ears polite.”

POPE, *Mor. Ess. IV.* 150.

Note 20.

“ Rari quippe boni: numerus vix est totidem, quot
Thebarum portæ, vel divitis ostia Nili.”

JUVENAL XIII. 26.

Note 21.

“ And that if one live well and virtuously,
In way of grace like as he ought to go,
The remanent assaile him with envy,
And him oppresse with grievous payne of woe,
Until he folowe like as the other do.”

BARCLAY'S *Ship of Fools*, 256. b.

Note 22.

Φωναντα Συγετοισιν, but no bad things any where.

THE END.

T. DAVISON, Lombard-street,
Whitefriars, London.

A
LETTER
FROM
THE KING
TO
HIS PEOPLE.



THE TWENTY-FIRST EDITION.

LONDON:
PRINTED FOR WILLIAM SAMS,
BOOKSELLER TO HIS ROYAL HIGHNESS THE DUKE OF YORK,
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MDCCCXXI.



Carlton Palace, Dec. 1, 1820.

TO ALL OUR LOVING SUBJECTS
AND COUNTRYMEN,
HOWEVER EXALTED IN RANK OR HUMBLE IN STATION,

THE KING

Sends alike his most affectionate greeting.

THE liberty of the press does not permit to your King, the possibility of remaining ignorant of passing events, or unaffected by the public agitation : at one and the same time it conveys to me sentiments of satisfaction or grounds of complaint ; the promised support of the constitutional, and the threat of the disaffected. My own conduct, the measures of my executive, the state of my kingdom, and the condition of my subjects, are placed before me in as many various, confused, and contradictory positions, as the greater or lesser degree of information, the rivalry of party, the animosity of prejudice, or the insidiousness of faction alternately suggest. In this chaos of contrariety, to me the first great difficulty is, to discover the truth ; the next, so to manage the discovery, as to produce from it some sound and dispassionate course of action.

This liberty of the press, in itself a great abstract good, capable alike of being converted into a bane or antidote ; and, by discreet and conscientious management, capable also of promoting and effect-

ing immortal benefits to mankind, or inflicting upon them irremediable ills, keeps up at least a constant communication between us, depriving the courtier of the power of concealing from his Sovereign public opinion, and placing him within the effect of inquiry. With such a constant possibility of explanation, a Monarch may be misguided, but cannot be uninformed ; he may adopt decisive rules of government, but cannot remain ignorant of their effects.

Although it is presumed that I become acquainted with political occurrences and opinions, solely through the channel of my official advisers, and can only constitutionally address my people through the regular organ of parliament, or of my council ; yet, at this momentous crisis, pregnant with evil to our common country, and to me so interesting as a man and a husband, but above all, as the inheritor of my Royal Father's crown, the form and mode of this communication may stand shielded and excused, in the generally anomalous character of the circumstances to which I shall hereafter advert : nor, on so singular an occasion, do I think it derogatory to the dignity of my exalted station, to attempt the dispersion of a mist, in which too many of my subjects have wandered, led on by a generous delusion.

I will not accuse, I do not accuse, of disaffection either to my person or government, *all* who are advocates for the cause of the Queen ; for in that cause, I perceive plainly a variety of motives in activity ; in the combination of those motives, differing widely from each other, the immediate danger appears to consist : but it is also, from their dis-

cordance, that future tranquillity may be expected. I am persuaded that, could my subjects upon reflection, be brought to consider the probability of my being an injured and calumniated Prince, they would abstain from further insult to the crown inherited from GEORGE THE THIRD. I am also persuaded that public opinion, although forced into extremes by the goadings of a portion of the daily press, alike unrestrained by truth, and as devoid of principle, as lost to the common civilities of society, would soon right itself; when a plain and simple narrative (such as any man of reasonable mind might comprehend) should supersede the distorted and tortured facts which have lately pre-occupied too great a part of the nation.

So many years have elapsed since the period of my unhappy marriage, that it may not be inexpedient (indeed, it appears absolutely necessary, in order to develope certain springs of action) to recall the times and circumstances in which, and by which, this event was produced.

The French Revolution was at its height; the Royal Family of France had been murdered; Holland had imbibed the revolutionary mania, and the Stadtholder had fled to this protecting country; at home, a traitorous spirit was actively at work; trials for high treason had served only to increase the insolence of faction, and foster rebellion; Ireland was on the verge of open revolt: and every political appearance threatened an attempt upon the constitution of these realms; a dreadful war was raging: yet, amidst and in the face of all these evils, it was the wish of my Royal Father to strengthen the succession to the throne of these realms; and the more

especially, as my royal brother of York had been married four years, without the expectation of a family. No moment could be less auspicious than the one chosen. My own inclination was averse to a marriage of expediency; nor need I tell my subjects under what disadvantages a Prince of the Royal Family labours, and more especially the heir-apparent born in the kingdom, in a chance for matrimonial happiness; and for myself, confined by the laws of my country within the limits of the realm, I could never hope to lead my countrymen to the field of battle, in her just wars, or extend my sphere of useful acquirement, by foreign travels, and the personal examination of the customs, manners, and government of other countries. Of the character of their princes and courtiers, I could only learn by intermediate report.

Debarred thus from active employment, and destined to pass my time in royal idleness, surrounded with pleasures at every step, and captivated with beauty, it would not be the most difficult enigma to solve, how I became thoughtlessly extravagant. Notwithstanding I had experienced the generosity of my countrymen, when twenty-four years of age; yet, in nine years after, my debts became again the object of serious consideration. In the midst of a war then raging, expensive beyond all former precedent, and with no glimpse of termination; when monarchy throughout Europe was threatened with annihilation, some powerful and unanswerable motive, or some important and ostensible good, could alone justify the minister of the day, in applying to parliament for the payment of the debts of an extravagant Prince, for such I acknowledge myself to have been.

The justification of the measure was found to be in *my marriage*.

The nation most generously paid my debts, made provision for such marriage, and I became an *expedient* party to the contract. For me there was no escape; the interest of my creditors demanded such sacrifice; a sacrifice of which my heart could only appreciate the extent.

But, although the match was forced, and I was left (unlike my subjects) to no voluntary choice, I had still a right to expect in a Princess of exalted ancestry, and one previously allied to me by relationship, a female of chaste person and uncontaminated taste.

But the morning which dawned on the consummation of this marriage, witnessed its virtual dissolution.

Our daughter, the lamented Princess Charlotte, the child of a fond and admiring nation, was born precisely at the moment prescribed by nature.

Of the causes which led to this immediate separation, which however was for a time most carefully concealed; and concealed, I trust, from no ungenerous feeling on my part, it does not belong to me to detail the explanation. But who beside ourselves was interested in it? Surely the family of the illustrious female in question! Did they complain? Did they remonstrate? Did they demand a restitution of conjugal rights between us? Did they interfere to conciliate, to palliate, to explain? Never. By their silence, then, was I justified in requiring at a proper moment, a more openly avowed separation. *The first wrong was done to me.*

The situation in which my Royal Father was

placed towards us both, was one of peculiar delicacy, and requires your particular attention. Independently of his own good and well-intentioned motives, he could not but feel that I had sacrificed my happiness to obedience to his will, and to those urgent and pressing political influences which directed that will. To him, therefore, it must have been painful to find, that all chance of connubial connexion was destroyed as soon as formed; it must also have been painful to him to know, that in commanding my marriage, he had (however unintentionally) clogged my high station with a source of constant anxiety and unceasing misrepresentation. Again: as towards the then Princess of Wales, his late Majesty, my revered Father and King, could not but have felt, that a marriage so brought about at his urgent desire, and enforced upon one positive condition, called forth from him more especially every increased attention towards the illustrious female whom he had introduced into the country; nor could this fatherly attention be otherwise than the more marked and decisive, on account of the relationship of that illustrious female in question to the then Queen of these realms. His most sacred Majesty was thus doubly and peculiarly bound to the protection of the interests of this illustrious female, as well as to a gentlemanly forbearance towards a son, through his influence so unexpectedly, so unusually, and I may add, so unhappily, circumstanced. This line of nice distinction and difficult conduct, so honourably and so nobly adhered to by his late Majesty, led to the erroneous supposition, that my honoured and royal parent and myself were at variance upon this important occasion: but such

was not in the slightest degree the fact; the subject was, as it were, interdicted mutually from our conferences and meetings, and I always honoured my royal parent the more highly for the motives which influenced and marked out the line of conduct he felt himself peculiarly called upon to adopt. His aim was, to soften by every means of alleviation in his power the situation of the Princess; but, at the same time, he was left without cause of accusation against his son's early determination.

Having rested the propriety of my conduct upon the silence of the relatives of the Princess, on an occasion when silence on their part could only have been imposed by a knowledge of the means of justification; and having discovered the principle which generosity and hospitality dictated to my late Father and King in his conduct towards the Princess, I now refer to a letter, dated Windsor Castle, April 30, 1796; which letter has been termed, insolently, unjustifiably, and almost traitorously, a letter of license.

“It was always competent for the Princess of Wales to demand from me, if she felt herself so justified, the restitution of her conjugal rights.” That a female of her lofty daring should not have taken such a step, admits a very strong argument in favour of the retiring husband; at all events, it allows of the inference, that there was a domestic and personal cause for separation, to which the parties mutually consented.

This letter of the 30th of April, above alluded to, may be considered as containing the terms of our separation. On this letter, which evidently refers to former conferences and previous communications, and was written to the Princess at her own request, I have but one observation to make, namely,—

“ That pending the arrangement for an open and avowed separation, the then Princess of Wales, through the medium of Lady Cholmondeley, required *that the separation should be final and conclusive, as to any future particular intercourse, and not to be renewed at any period, even though our child the Princess Charlotte should die.*” To this proposition I assented; by this proposition I have abided, and ever will abide. It is an extra proposition emanating from the Queen; it contains her own terms.

From the moment of this open and avowed separation, *rendered perpetual* by the proposition of her Royal Highness; I can call herself and the kingdom to witness, whether any thing has been withheld from the personal accommodation of the Princess of Wales? Whether a suitable establishment, regulated by herself, was not provided for her comfort? Whether I ever interfered with her arrangements, her society, or her social convenience; in short, I boldly challenge my people to the proof, whether I had ever been guilty of any step, directly, or indirectly, to break in upon that arrangement of tranquillity, and comfortable society, which was the basis of our mutual separation.

This separation between the Princess and myself, partook not in its origin, of the smallest political mixture; it was purely an unhappy but unavoidable domestic occurrence, of which the good manners of both parties might have softened the effect; and in which, strict propriety of conduct, such as befitted the second lady in the land, might have commanded my respect; though an insurmountable obstacle was opposed to any further feeling. During this separation, the Princess of Wales possessed the most uncon-

trolled choice and command of her own household; she was mistress of her own conduct; was still the wife of the heir-apparent to the throne, and mother of the heiress presumptive. The Princess must have been aware of the superior legal responsibility attached to the high and important rank she held in the empire; and the peculiarity of her situation demanded a greater degree of discretion; painful and singular as was that situation, it was one in which the Princess might have shone with additional splendour, had she maintained a dignified and elegant association.

I am charged by the giddy press and the partisans of the Queen, with having, upon all occasions, besieged her with spies and suborned traducers.

At the period of this separation in 1796, the then Princess of Wales surrounded herself, not with any friends of mine, but with an establishment of her own choice. But suppose, for argument sake, this false assertion to be true; how completely useless would have been the office of those spies and tale-bearers, had the conduct of her Royal Highness given no grounds for their occupation! In such a case, the more closely her Royal Highness had been watched, the more spotless, chaste and unquestionable would her conduct have appeared. Ought it, under any circumstances, even of presumed aggravation, to have been otherwise?

I approach now the period of the first investigation of 1806, which took place *ten years* after the separation; and which carried back its research four years from the date of its report. The very circumstance, that it became necessary to trace *through several years* the conduct of her Royal Highness, allows me fairly to assert that which was the fact; namely,

“ that it was not until after tale upon tale had been in wide circulation for a long period ; nor until those reports assumed the threatening character of high treason, that I determined to advise with a retired Lord Chancellor on the measures necessary to be adopted.” Had I been actuated by the foul spirit attributed to me, I had at that moment an opportunity of gratifying such revenge, by demanding a public trial instead of a private investigation. The base political purposes to which the privacy of that proceeding was subsequently applied, might almost tempt me to regret that I had not done so : yet I do not regret it, since the motive was (even at the very moment of an inquiry becoming legally expedient) to shield the object of it as much as possible from publicity, I might almost say, to accommodate her acquittal. Upon this occasion, the reputation and character of those eminent noblemen, Lords Erskine, Spencer, Grenville, and Ellenborough, must first be destroyed, before I can be charged with provoking *an unnecessary inquiry* into the existence of circumstances which had long been circulating through every rank of society, which were at the time generally believed to be true, or enveloped in a mystery far removed from that absence of all doubtful and suspicious appearances, which should characterize the conduct of a Princess of Wales. On this occasion, the same honourable feelings which had invariably guided the conduct of my Royal Father and King, inclined him still to shield and protect her Royal Highness, and to place the least culpable interpretation upon the circumstances of that mysterious case. It was the same generous feeling which induced my Royal Father to adopt, as

a previous step, my proposal of a private and confidential inquiry, in a matter, where less considerate conduct might, at once, have transferred the cause of offence to a public tribunal. Throughout the whole of this affair, her Royal Highness was treated with a delicacy suitable to the peculiarity of her situation, to which every, and the most generous, consideration was paid. Her Royal Highness was aware of it, and *at the moment* felt herself so treated.

Did I, upon this occasion, dissent from the line of conduct recommended to be pursued? No. Did I interfere with the duties of the noble lords commissioners upon the occasion? No. Did I, as a husband, cease to perform the terms of separation, even after the imperious necessity which had devolved upon me as Prince of Wales, of requiring indemnity for the succession to the throne? No. I assert, that in the conflicting duties imposed upon me as a husband, and as Prince of Wales, that when the admonition of my royal parent was deemed sufficient for the occasion, I acquiesced. Nor, on a subsequent occasion, did I hesitate to pay the debts of the illustrious person in question, in her character of my wife. Nay more, I carried still further the spirit of conciliation, and proof of my acquiescence in the result of such investigation, by the subsequent advance to honour and distinction of one of the parties implicated criminally in the charge against the then Princess of Wales. I am, therefore, on that occasion, the avowed approver of the result of the inquiry; and stand convicted, either of being regardless of my own honour, or of being satisfied that the accusation was overstrained.

Before I dismiss this part of my letter, I would

direct the attention of my subjects and countrymen to the rigour of the law, applicable to the wife of the heir-apparent to the throne. An error which, in any female of less distinguished rank, is merely a civil injury, in the wife of the Prince of Wales *is a crime against the nation*. The mere act of offence is in both cases alike; but in the one may be attended with the last penalty, that of death. If, therefore, in any proceedings connected with the case of a prince of Wales, there appears a greater measure of legal harshness, to which our moral feelings are opposed, it should be remembered, that the anomaly is created by the statutes of the realm. I made not the law for myself.

When the Princess of Wales had received the admonitory letter of 1806, no complaint at the time was made by her, either against its justice, or the mode in which the inquiry had been conducted. It was reserved to revive the painful subject seven years after its occurrence; and to attack the proceedings, as well as the intermediate restraint which had been imposed on the intercourse of the Princess with our daughter, in a letter dated early in 1813, addressed to me as Regent of these United Kingdoms. That letter, as containing a matter of complaint deserving of inquiry, was submitted, without regard to the personally offensive remarks contained in it, to several dignitaries of the church and of the law. Upon this second report, the restriction alluded to was still continued, and the aspersions cast upon the testimony of certain witnesses connected with the inquiry of 1806, were pronounced to be *wholly groundless, and without the slightest support of Proof*.

It is important for me to draw your attention to

the circumstance, that the two reports were drawn up by noblemen of differing political sentiments, accustomed to constant parliamentary opposition; if therefore from such an ordeal, the proceedings of 1806 have escaped censure, and consequently became stamped with a character of fair and impartial justice, I have a right to demand, and do demand, a full and complete acquittal from all those false and unprincely motives, by which my conduct has been stigmatized; I plead guilty only of one motive, "That of preserving to my daughter her rights, and protecting the purity of succession to the throne of my ancestors."

Had the result of this second report, produced by a set of political reasoners wholly opposed to the first commissioners, varied from the report of such commissioners; had it brought home to the witnesses upon the former occasion, any charge of perjury, or have elicited any trace of unworthy motive, or corruptly contrived evidence; it would have been my unavoidable duty as Regent, and the office most pleasing to me as a husband and man, to have revived that inquiry, and have punished the guilty participators in it; and besides, it was at all times open to the Princess *to bring her accusers before the tribunals of her country*. Unless, therefore, every principle of civilized conduct has been violated by me, and I alone have proceeded upon impulses different from all mankind, surely, on my own account, I must have rejoiced at any elucidation which had sprung up, had it been only for the mere selfish purpose *of wiping from myself* the mortification of such recorded aspersions. Was it to be supposed, that I should tamely cover myself with the mantle of my

own shame, could I have had it in my power to destroy every thread of the garment? I should have deserved the scorn of the age, and ill merited the allegiance of my father's subjects, could I have hesitated one moment in following the minutest ray which might detect the mystery of 1806, and completely clear her Royal Highness from those charges.

But from the date of this letter in 1813, the whole transaction, which had hitherto been treated as a domestic difference, assumed on the part of the Princess of Wales a political aspect. To this point I shall subsequently refer; for the present, therefore, I will pass on to the period of her departure to visit the continent.

Upon this occasion, her Royal Highness addressed her intentions to me, through the medium of the Earl of Liverpool, in a letter dated the 25th July, 1814, in which her Royal Highness stated as her first and her most urgent motive for wishing to retire to the continent, "the restoration of tranquillity to my mind." Her Royal Highness then goes on to complain of the indignities and mortification to which she had been exposed, by being withheld from receiving her nearest relations, and the most intimate friends of the late Duke of Brunswick, her father; and alludes to the rupture of the proposed alliance between our daughter, the Princess Charlotte, and the Prince of Orange. Her Royal Highness also pointing out her route, states that she intends to return to Brunswick her native country, and with a degree of uncertainty adds, she *may* afterwards travel into Italy and Greece, and proposes certain arrangements as to the disposition of her private pro-

perty. To all these points I subjoin the reply as transmitted through my prime minister, with this one observation, that Lord Liverpool does not *silently* pass over the circumstance of her Royal Highness possessing apartments in a royal palace, (to which her Royal Highness makes no allusion in her letter,) but absolutely states, that such apartments will still be retained for the use of her Royal Highness; thus, if any conscious doubts had existed in the mind of the Princess, and this omission was intended to draw from me any expression as to the length of her stay on the continent, or whether I considered that the departure of the Princess was intended to be permanent, such doubts are clearly removed by the specific allusion of Lord Liverpool to those particular apartments in a royal palace.

Her Royal Highness then leaves England by her own voluntary act, at her own express desire, retaining by the avowed will of the Prince (acting on behalf of the King) a residence, to which, at any time, she might return. There is also a second point in this letter of the Princess, on which I would make one short observation. Her Royal Highness, referring to the mode of disposal of part of her property, uses this expression: "The Princess of Wales hopes the Prince Regent will *grant* this favour, *the last that she will solicit.*" I ask, then, is this the language of a wife receiving injuries from a husband; or is it not characteristic of language from a wife to a husband who, though separated from that husband, had ever been accustomed to receive from him every favour and benefit which could with honour be granted? I subjoin the reply alluded to, as it corrects the political points contained in the letter of the Princess.

*Letter of Lord Liverpool to the Princess of Wales,
dated the 28th of July, 1814.*

“ Lord Liverpool has had the honour to receive the letter of her Royal Highness. Having communicated it to the Prince Regent, he has ordered him to inform her Royal Highness that he can have no objection to the intentions of her Royal Highness to effect the design which she announces to the Prince Regent, of returning to her native country, to visit her brother the Duke of Brunswick, assuring her, that the Prince Regent will never throw any obstacle in the way of her present or future intentions as to the place where she may wish to reside.

“ The Prince Regent leaves her Royal Highness at liberty to exercise her own discretion as to her abode in this country or on the continent, as it may be convenient to her.

“ Lord Liverpool is also commanded, on the part of the Prince Regent, to inform her Royal Highness, that he will not throw any obstacles in the way of the arrangements of her Royal Highness, whatever they may be, respecting the house at Blackheath, which belonged to the late Duchess of Brunswick, or the rest of the private property of her Royal Highness. But that, for reasons rather too long to explain, the Prince Regent will not permit the Princess Charlotte to be ranger of Greenwich Park, or to occupy any of the houses at Blackheath, which her Royal Highness has hitherto occupied.

“ Lord Liverpool has also been enjoined, on the part of the Prince Regent, before he closes the letter which he has the honour to send to her Royal Highness, to tell her, in relation to the two articles which her Royal Highness has put in her letter concerning the rupture of the marriage of the Princess Charlotte with the hereditary Prince of Orange, as well as to the reason for which the allied Sovereigns did not, previously to their departure from England, pay their visit to her Royal Highness ; that, as to the first article, Lord Liverpool is commanded by the Prince Regent to inform her Royal Highness, that the Prince Regent is not persuaded that the private considerations of the circumstances in which the Princess is placed, can have been an obstacle to the marriage of the Princess Charlotte. As to the second article, Lord Liverpool is also enjoined, on the part of the Prince Regent, to signify to her Royal Highness, that the Prince Regent never opposed himself to the allied Sovereigns making a visit to her Royal Highness during their stay in London.

“ Lord Liverpool has the honour to be, with all esteem and the highest consideration.

“ P. S. The Prince Regent can make no difficulties on the subject of the directions which the Princess has the intention of giving as to the house at Blackheath ; neither will the Prince Regent oppose her Royal Highness's retaining the apartments in the Palace of Kensington, in the same manner as she possessed them while in London, for the convenience of herself and suite.”

At the period then of the departure of her Royal Highness from the kingdom, the very last communication between us was on my part, that of assuring her, that the residence more particularly occupied by her as a state residence, should be considered as remaining still at her disposal; thus placing a seal of oblivion on the past, and according every thing but personal communication.

Her Royal Highness was enabled to quit England as became her rank, with a suite of her own choice, with zealous friends among that suite, and with every facility afforded her of rendering her stay on the Continent comfortable and convenient. Her public reception at foreign courts naturally depended on, and was regulated by, established etiquette.

I have thus brought down the material circumstances of my unhappy marriage, to the period of the departure of her Royal Highness for the Continent; the transactions in themselves, however unfortunate, are plain and simple, easily understood, and as capable of explanation, when viewed without any selfish tendency to party or faction. The incidents may be thus briefly stated:—

1. Our private separation.
2. Our public separation.
3. The interval between our public separation and the inquiry of 1806.
4. The complaint of the Princess in 1813, as to the restricted intercourse between herself and daughter.
5. The retirement of the Princess to the Continent.

The first point, (the reasons of our private separation), it does not become me to explain; her Royal Highness might (if she had so pleased,) have claimed in the proper court, the restitution of her conjugal

rights; such a proceeding would have produced an explanation.

As to the second point, we separated upon terms mutually understood, and to which the Princess added herself a peremptory condition; those terms have by me been inviolably preserved; as a husband, I enabled my wife to maintain the dignity of her rank and station as Princess of Wales; I visited her separation with no pecuniary privations, but, on the contrary, paid for her, debts exceeding her means of expenditure, to the amount of forty-nine thousand pounds; the government of the country, at the same time, liquidating a further sum of thirty-one thousand pounds.

As to the third point, the preceding remarks, in part apply. On the subject of the actual inquiry, I may be allowed to say, that the Prince of Wales is born with certain rights previously created, as a line of duty to be by him fulfilled. The preservation of the chastity of his wife, with a view to the purity of the succession, is one of those duties. When, therefore, in consequence of rumours, too loud and too deep to remain unheard, I demanded an inquiry, as part of the duty of my high birth and national rank, I submitted the case to the responsible ministers of the crown; I acquiesced in the sentence passed upon the termination of the inquiry, and bowed to the decision which had been pronounced by the warm and zealous friend of the Princess, who was judge upon the occasion.

As to the fourth point, I endeavoured, by every means in my power, to prevent our disputes from taking a political turn, embarrassing to the government of the country; and I most particularly aimed

at preserving, in the mind of the Princess Charlotte, a neutrality on the delicate occasion; the restriction imposed on the intercourse between the Princess and her daughter was connected with the system of her education, which, by law, rested with the Sovereign. When, at a subsequent period, in 1813, the Princess of Wales addressed to me as Regent, a letter alluding to such restriction, and also to the proceedings of 1806, almost grown out of recollection, I submitted such letter to noblemen, differing in political opinion from those who had on the former occasion made a report on the conduct of the Princess; the result of this re-inquiry produced no change, no imputation on the former statements and evidence, and I still continued to consider the whole affair as one of domestic inconvenience, inasmuch as the succession to the throne was pronounced *not to be endangered*.

As to the fifth point, upon the retirement of her Royal Highness to the Continent, I continued to the Princess her residence in a royal palace, leaving it as a domicile open to her return; and, I declare, upon my honour as a Prince, that I never, on any previous occasion, threw the slightest obstacle in the way of her Royal Highness's comfort, tranquillity, and domestic arrangement. The affairs of Princes cannot be conducted in the same obscure and unostentatious mode as those of private individuals; to snatch a few moments of private life is, in a Prince, to enjoy real happiness. All the difficulties which have occurred in the case in question have been produced and created, they were not of natural origin, but have been foisted on the original evil by factious persons, seeking to advance their own politi-

cal purposes. Had not the Princess placed herself avowedly in such hands, many of the mortifications of her situation had been avoided; they would, indeed, have had no existence. Finally, I declare again, upon my honour, that my conduct aimed to keep the whole unhappy affair within the character of a domestic and purely personal misfortune; and it is only by the attempts made by faction, to give it a political complexion, that the attention of the people has been fixed upon it as a national grievance.

I have now, my subjects and fellow-countrymen, gone through the first great division of my letter; I approach the second, I trust, with feelings as a King, suitable to the occasion.

Hitherto I have appeared only as Prince of Wales, and Regent.

* * * * *

Her Royal Highness quitted England as Princess of Wales early in August in the year 1814, and in the succeeding November (a short interval of three months), appears *to have consulted my tranquillity*, by furnishing grounds for *a third* inquiry into the propriety of her conduct. After *three years of rumours*, *a commission* to examine into their truth or falsehood was *a third time* rendered necessary for the honour of the crown of these realms; thus, in both cases, as well in the investigation of 1806, as also in that of 1818, it was not until *years of rumour* had been allowed to rouse suspicions, that any official measures were adopted to inquire into their reality.

Possibly the great error has been, that such rumours were permitted to remain so long without an inquiry. Had spies really surrounded her Royal Highness, the purposes of a commission of inquiry

would have been anticipated and rendered unnecessary.

When the powers of my regency merged in the succession to the throne, one of the first duties devolving upon me as a head of the Church, was, “to settle according to the Act of Uniformity, such parts of the Liturgy as were affected by the decease of my venerable Father and King of blessed memory.”

How lightly have too many of my subjects thought of the feelings by which their Sovereign must have been influenced upon so solemn an occasion !

How inconsiderately have too many of my subjects viewed this vital act of religion as a mere matter of form, requiring only a dash of the pen !

How narrowly have too many of my subjects confined their sense of this form, within the bounds of custom and precedent !

How blindly have too many of my subjects viewed this act of devotional formulary !

And how completely have too many of my subjects separated the act to be done, from him upon whom fell the most painful duty of its performance !

Behold then, your Sovereign, in the presence of that God to whom all hearts are open ; required by the first servant of our holy national Church, to sanction as head of that Church, a formulary, in which the thousands and tens of thousands, and millions of his subjects were to address their prayers, and praises, and supplications to the King of Kings.

Behold him thus situated, called upon to doubt and to decide between his conscience and his feelings, whether his own wife deserved, without hesitation, to be admitted to the high dignity, *de facto*, of Queen of these United Kingdoms. Behold him,

thus situated, and himself obliged to decide, no other authority, according to the laws of the realm, having power to relieve him from the duty. And why was I thus called upon to doubt? Because my council, according to their oaths, which is “to advise for the King’s honour and good of the public, without partiality, through affection, love, meed, doubt, or dread;” and in performance of their duty, which is “*to inquire into all offences against the government;*” had not left me unacquainted with the existence of a *primâ facie* case, of gross and long-continued adultery, alleged to be committed by the late Princess of Wales, now *de jure* the Queen.

It became therefore evident, it was unavoidable, that whenever the Queen thought proper to return to my kingdom, she must meet this charge, the truth or falsehood of which remained still to be proved. My council strictly confined themselves to their legal duty, *that of inquiring only* : and the features of that inquiry imposed upon them the painful duty of placing the Queen in a state of abeyance.

This solemn decision, I may say, this vitally religious act, presented itself to me in two points of view. Was I, with such knowledge in my possession, to recommend unhesitatingly and specially, the name of the Queen, to the prayers of the church? Or was I to leave the name to be inserted when her Majesty should have wiped off this foul charge of adultery? In the first case, it might possibly have fallen to my painful office, again to have expunged the insertion; and in the second case, it might happily have been my duty to have supplied the omission. Which, of the two modes afforded the least probability of future embarrassment? As yet, only a

prima facie suspicion of adultery was exhibited against the Queen; I had a right to presume her innocent, I had a right to expect that future circumstances might justify the insertion of her Majesty's name, but such an insertion being a matter of discretion, the words "*and all the Royal Family,*" *did not exclude the Queen.* To have inserted the Queen's name specially, and subsequently to have found myself obliged by the law of the land to expunge it; would, with a great degree of reason, have subjected me to the charge of having first introduced such name, that I might enjoy the malicious triumph of erasing it; thus adding increased harshness to any future sentence. By using the phrase, "*and all the Royal Family,*" *any future alteration,* under any circumstances of substantiated guilt or innocence, *would be rendered unnecessary.* To have inserted the name of the Queen, with a knowledge such as I possessed through my legal council, would, in my opinion, have been contrary to the laws of the kingdom; for among other charges which *might* have been brought forward against the Queen, was, "her probable conversion to the Roman Catholic faith." But to *postpone* the insertion of the name of the Queen, and afterwards to have been called upon to supply the omission, would, to her Majesty, have been a gracious act of acquittal, and restoration to regal honour; and I had a right to hope that such would be the result. Besides, the object and intention of the postponement of this insertion, was most certainly, not with a view to any proceedings against the Queen, but in anticipation of that continuance of mutual separation, which the Queen, in her letter of leave, declared to be "necessary to my future tranquillity."

I will suppose for one moment, the insertion to have been made. Had it been done under concealment from me, of existing circumstances, *my ministers would have been guilty of misprision of treason, and been liable to impeachment.* But as it was done with my knowledge; if ten thousands of ten thousand tongues were to demand of me, to tarnish the crown of your King, I would abandon it to the people rather than commit so great a crime. Whatever may have been the indiscretions of THE MAN, the future historian of England shall never record them as connected with THE KING.

It should not be overlooked, that the alteration of the Liturgy was also to regulate my own public devotion, as well as that of my subjects; should I not then by the special insertion of the name of the Queen, under existing circumstances, have most deservedly subjected myself to a charge of impious and detestable hypocrisy? “You have been praying yourself specially for the Queen, you Royal Hypocrite! whilst you have watched her destruction;” would have been a just and unanswerable accusation against me; an accusation, which, if well-founded, would have rendered the word of the King unworthy of belief.

Those only are the real exclusionists, who do not choose to comprehend the Queen, as implied in the words, “and all the Royal Family.”

Had either the religious or legal considerations of this important point permitted me conscientiously to have inserted the name of the Queen in the Liturgy of the Church; all other minor considerations would have had no bearing upon the question; for that which would have been consistent with religion and law, could not have been *contra bonos mores*. I dwell

not therefore on the subject, as connected with the morals of the country, but in its consideration, and in all its vital bearings, I cannot but have contemplated the consequences of a Queen charged with high crimes and misdemeanors, sitting upon that throne so lately occupied by the personification of chastity and matrimonial excellence.

Will the virtuous and noble, the high-minded and chaste, the amiable and domestic females of England, adopt the Queen as an example and model worthy of their imitation? Will they pronounce her faultless? Will they compose her court? If I can place the Queen on the throne of my ancestors upon such terms, I am ready to do so. Upon none other, can or ought a Queen to sit upon the throne of pre-eminent England.

I proceed now to the offer of an ample allowance offered to the Queen, provided she continued to remain abroad in the retirement she had voluntarily adopted; and the alternative with which that offer was accompanied. I have pointed out *this transaction*, and the *suspension in the Liturgy*, as acts which *may appear* to have emanated more immediately from my own personal feelings.

I have previously remarked, that from the period of my becoming Regent, the differences between the Princess and myself had assumed a political character, and been treated by many as a party question.

The companions of my youth, and the distinguished characters with whom, in my earlier years, I had intimately associated, had created in the public mind, a widely-extended, and readily believed opinion, that when the sceptre of my Father should descend to me, I should, from among those associates, have

chosen the members of my administration. During the discussion of the terms of the regency, I was careful to avoid giving any pledge of the line of policy I might find it expedient to adopt. A short previous administration, composed of those political friends by whom it was conjectured my councils would have been directed, had enabled me to form some opinion of their executive talents; and *notwithstanding*, an overture was made by me to them, to propose an administration. But when I found the conditions required would have reduced me to a mere political automaton, of which they were to possess the key; that not content with forming the administration, they required also, that I should be surrounded in my household by their adherents, and left to no choice in the appointment of my own attendants; when with this, I compared the candour and the unequivocal absence of all personal feeling with which the bill creating the Regency was carried by the then ministry; and above all, the frank, loyal, and respectful regret which was shewn to the calamity of my revered Parent; and the so immediate provision made for the resumption by him of the regal dignity, that it should have pleased Providence so to have restored him, my Royal Father would have awakened as if from a dream, and have found himself unreminded of his affliction; when to this I added the important consideration, that the flame of freedom was beginning to glimmer in Spain; that the then administration were prepared to take advantage of every circumstance favourable to the destruction of the military tyrant of Europe; and when all these various considerations were upheld by the weight of personal character which was contained

in the then cabinet ; I felt sufficiently justified in not suffering former prepossessions to stand for one moment in the way of newly-created duties. I felt that an existing experienced executive, was, at such a time, safer than a theoretical cabinet. I had also a doubt in my own mind, whether, during my Sovereign's life, I ought, as Regent, to adopt the principles of those who had been violently opposed to my Royal Father's measures, or pursue a line of policy unchanged, and such as my King would have continued had he remained the active head of the Empire. This was a feeling of the heart ; it was mine.

This, my determination, produced two consequences ; 1. A series of unbroken, glorious, and important victories, attended with such results, as the history of the world, within a similar period of time, cannot produce ; 2. The conversion of my matrimonial differences into a political attack upon my authority.

From this moment, then, the Queen, by becoming the tool of party, gave to her cause and her conduct a new feature, and an importance which required the vigilant eye of the government.

I have been led into this digression, that the distinction I still endeavoured to uphold between my marital and royal station, might be plainly and easily comprehended. I return now to the consideration of the offer made to the Queen, of an allowance upon certain stipulations ; *viz.*, that the Queen should *cease to use* the name and style of Queen of England, and remain abroad, where she had voluntarily seceded.

The period when this determination was decided

upon, must not be forgotten; it must not only not be forgotten, but it should be allowed its due weight in the decision of so momentous an affair. It appears almost, indeed, to be overlooked, that I met my first parliament in the month of April, at the very period, and while a set of infuriated, misguided and unhappy culprits were on their trial for a conspiracy to overturn the constitution and government of these realms, of which the commencement was intended to be, the indiscriminate assassination of my cabinet ministers. The general situation of the country, at that precise moment, appears also to have been thrown into the back ground. I cannot better recall those unhappy inauspicious moments, than by repeating again to my subjects the topics addressed to the Lords and Commons in Parliament assembled, upon our first meeting.

My Lords and Gentlemen,

“ Deeply as I regret that the machinations and designs of the disaffected should have led in some parts of the country, to acts of open violence and insurrection, I cannot but express my satisfaction at the promptitude with which those attempts have been suppressed by the vigilance and activity of the magistrates, and by the zealous co-operation of all those of my subjects whose exertions have been called forth to support the authority of the laws.

“ The wisdom and firmness manifested by the late parliament and the due execution of the laws, have greatly contributed to restore confidence throughout the kingdom; and to discountenance those principles of sedition and irreligion, which had been disseminated with such malignant perseverance, and had poisoned the minds of the unwary and ignorant.

“ I rely upon the continued support of parliament, in my determination to maintain, by all the means intrusted to my hands, the public safety and tranquillity.

“ Deploring, as we all must, the distress which still unhappily prevails among many of the labouring classes of the community, and anxiously looking forward to its removal or mitigation, it is, in the mean time, our common duty, effectually to protect the loyal, the

peaceable, and the industrious, against those practices of turbulence and intimidation, by which the period of relief can only be deferred, and by which the pressure of the distress has been incalculably aggravated.

“ I trust that an awakened sense of the dangers which they have incurred, and of the acts which have been employed to seduce them, will bring back by far the greater part of those who have been unhappily led astray, and will revive in them that spirit of loyalty, that due submission to the laws, and that attachment to the constitution, which subsist unabated in the hearts of the great body of the people, and which, under the blessing of Divine Providence, have secured to the British Nation, the enjoyment of a larger share of practical freedom, as well as of prosperity and happiness, than have fallen to the lot of any nation in the world.”

If to the pending trials alluded to, and this general reference to the state of the kingdom, suffering under severe privations in some of its provinces, are added the numerous cases of treason, libel, and minor political offences under the progressive cognizance of the courts of law ; I think my subjects and countrymen will admit, that to such previously existing evils *no addition was wanting to renew internal agitation which was beginning to subside.* The return of the Queen, under the circumstances which she must necessarily meet, was, of all others, calculated to revive that internal agitation ; and why was it so calculated ? Because the Queen had (as I have previously remarked) given, by her conduct, a political feeling to the differences between us. Had this not been the case, she could not have had, at least she ought not to have had, any motives for her return ; or had she any, she ought to have sacrificed them to the welfare of our country.

From 1796 we had been separated, a period now of twenty-four years ; disturbed by an almost constant suspicion of her conduct : the Queen had been estranged from Court, our Royal Daughter was no more ; and her Majesty had but one duty to perform

towards me, "the performance of an agreed separation."

A Queen Consort of England has no political rank, she possesses *in ease* of the Sovereign, certain inherent prerogatives; those prerogatives are capable of being enjoyed by her, in her absence; they required not her presence. The presence of the Queen could neither revive trade (languishing in some of its branches), tranquillize the irritation of distress, or conciliate the clamour of faction; and, indeed, many records of English History hand down to us, the impolitic and dangerous counsels, which have ensued from the interference of Queens Consort in the political contests of the times. Although by way of eminent distinction, the word "Queen" is applicable only to the King's wife, yet, it originally signifies a wife, or woman. A Queen of England (unless Queen in her own right,) is a subject of the King, and can claim no political character from the people; to her, at a coronation, no oath is administered, and no homage or allegiance offered. The coronation of a Queen is distinct, and subsequent to that of the King; it is not at all necessary to the accession or title to the throne; and when performed, is a ceremony so performed for the greater honour of the kingly office. It proceeds from the King*.

If, therefore, I am to define the office or duty of a Queen Consort, I might sum it up in a few words, "To give a tone to *the morals* of the country." Does not the late reign furnish an indisputable proof of the truth of this axiom?

Since then the Queen had deprived herself of the

* Taylor's *Glory of Regality*.

possibility of performing the duties of her station, and her return could produce none of those effects which were so evident during the long reign of my late Royal and revered Parents, could the next object of my solicitude be otherwise, than an attempt, still to treat the long borne separation, as a personal and domestic transaction?

The Queen was growing old, we are both beyond the hey-day of life, and the levities of conduct attributed to her, might now be supposed to have worn or to have been wearing away. Our country required political repose; and, above all, an internal quietude. Had no charge of adultery at all existed, there were sufficient grounds on both sides, for wishing, and for rendering desirable, a continuance of the existing separation.

In private life, what would the friends of a married couple, so long divided as the Queen and myself have been, think of the conduct of a wife, who would wish to return to her husband, under circumstances, such as have occurred between us? Would any female in England so *meanly* conduct herself? Would any husband in England so take back a wife? If he would not, why should your King? If the female would not so return, why should the Queen? You will tell me, "To claim her rights." I reply, that the Queen possesses no political rights; but certain prescribed prerogatives; those prerogatives are legally defined, their value as personal advantages can be ascertained, they can be enjoyed by the Queen, as well absent as present. I have offered her an equivalent. You will tell me, "That *she* chooses to return to our country, and that I have no right to restrain her." The Queen has chosen to re-

turn, and by the laws of the realm must she now abide; the Queen is my subject.

If, then, I am asked, “Why did I offer the Queen fifty thousand pounds a year to remain abroad, and cease to use openly the style and title of Queen of England,” I answer, “To purchase the tranquillity of my country; to prevent a recurrence of those acts which had seduced so many of my subjects into danger, and to bring them back to that spirit of loyalty, that due submission to the laws, and that attachment to the constitution, which I hope still subsists in the hearts of the great body of my people;” all which I knew would be endangered by the *selfish return of a Queen*, who never can, and never will, sit upon the throne of England whilst George the Fourth wears the crown of his forefathers; until the female nobility shall, in a body, justify him in such act, with their sanction and presence, every other rank of the virtuous and the chaste would coincide.

Before I conclude this subject of an offered pension, I cannot but regret extremely, that the chance of cool and dispassionate deliberation which the Queen might have been disposed to have given to my offer and its alternative, was greatly diminished by the neglect of her Attorney-General, in the delivery of an ultimatum communicated to him in the month of April. Such neglect rendered Lord Hutchinson’s communication so much the more sudden, stern, and unexpected. Of the zeal of that gentleman (her Majesty’s Attorney-General) no one can entertain a higher opinion than myself; for his own sake, I may be allowed to say, that nothing disgraced his advocacy, but the threat of personal danger held out to the assembled Peers

Peers of the realm. Otherwise, who would not wish to have a cause so defended? Had also her Majesty's Solicitor-General omitted one or two similes in his declamation, he had also retired from his duty with more dignity. Upon the grounds of the case I am silent; but, looking to the conduct of the Lord Chancellor, the differences which existed between the members of the cabinet; the splendid and argumentative talents of the Opposition, all tending and working together to elicit truth and produce an impartial judgment; I may fearlessly ask, if, under such principles and in such an assembly, justice is not to be found? I ask, fearlessly, where does she dwell upon earth? I view, finally, the pause which this unhappy affair has taken, as a striking proof of that inflexible adherence to parliamentary avowals, which combines the good man with the great minister; and as the performance of the pledge, that "the Queen should have an equivalent for any and every obstacle which the anomaly of her case presented in the obstruction of her trial."

I am now drawing towards the close of this my letter, in the which my faithful subjects and excellent fellow-countrymen will (I trust) agree with me, not only that the difference existing between her Majesty and myself arose out of a domestic cause, and was solely of a domestic nature; but that all the popular feeling which has been excited, has arisen from the political misdirection imposed upon the transaction, a transaction important to the nation only as it can be connected with their welfare. How that welfare can be promoted by forcing upon a loathing husband an equally loathing wife, appears to me, a problem in government, not

easily to be maintained in argument, or proved by historical reference. If I am unhappily united to a bad wife, or the Queen be under the caprice of a bad husband ; provided those unpleasantries be confined within the limits of our personal conduct, and are not mixed up with affairs of state, I see then no impediment to the due constitutional performance of my duties as King : but on the contrary, if the people disturb my kingly office, and clog its executive or dignity with an unseasonable family blister, the chance is that the system of government may become ill executed, greatly obstructed, or completely embarrassed. If such is the aim of the partizans of the Queen, I have then only to declare this my determination, “ That if the claims of the Queen can make no impression on me *upon their own merits*, any political association which she may form to give weight to, or to disguise such claims, will only call forth from me as your King, a firmer defence of my own rights, which are the rights of the constitution under which I, the nobles, and the people, all alike find reciprocal protection.”

My people will now (I trust) begin to allow themselves more clearly to define, and more accurately to preserve the distinction between my conduct as Prince of Wales, with reference to the purity of the succession to the throne of my forefathers, and my behaviour as a separated husband. In the one case, the performance of painful public duties has devolved upon me, but I feel satisfied that their unavoidable performance has not been accompanied by uncourteous or vexatious personal conduct. To the high individual as a separate wife, every attention has been invariably paid, and upon

every occasion, money has been at her command for the purposes of comfort, pleasure, or fickleness. Surely, in return for such complete observance of the terms of mutual separation, the Prince of Wales had a right to expect the performance of the only duty remaining to be performed by, and the only one required of, the Princess; namely, “*An unquestionable and unequivocal propriety of conduct.*”

I could not probably fix upon a more convenient or appropriate mode of portraying the consequences of the present public effervescence than by anticipating the sentiments which some historian of my reign may hand down to future ages. I will do this in two ways; *First*, Upon the supposition, that the Queen (even after what has already occurred,) will be reinstated in all the prerogatives of her rank;” *and secondly*, “That the Queen will remain estranged from the crown.”

IN THE FIRST CASE, the historian may be supposed thus to express himself: “George the Fourth, after a Regency of nearly nine years, succeeded to the throne of his venerable and most excellent Father, whose eventful reign had extended beyond the period of any other British Monarch. The brilliant events of the Regency of George the Fourth, unparalleled in history, are already recorded; his reign commenced amidst domestic losses, (his Brother, the Duke of Kent, having died very suddenly at Sidmouth, in Devonshire, six days only before their Royal Parent) public agitation, and great national distress, attended with all those factious symptoms, which the English History appears almost invariably to record, as a symptom of peace. A month had not elapsed, before a most atrocious conspiracy, aiming no less than at

the indiscriminate assassination of all his Majesty's Ministers during a cabinet dinner, was detected. On the twenty-first of April, His Majesty met his parliament, and in his Royal Speech upon the occasion, alluded to the disquietude and distress of the kingdom, hinted at their cause, and expressed a hope, that in the returning loyalty and legal obedience of the people, a remedy for those evils would be found. The atrociousness of the conspiracy alluded to, had opened the eyes of the supine, and alarmed the fears of the timid; and a more imposing public attitude being consequently produced, tranquillity was gradually increasing into confidence. At this moment, it pleased the Queen, (who had now been separated from her Royal Husband *twenty-four years*, and had estranged herself from England for six years,) to return from the continent under the auspices of *one Wood*, an Alderman of the City of London. The Queen returned, in the teeth of a proposition from the administration, that she should still continue to remain abroad, and not seek to disturb a connexion so long broken off; and in defiance of a threat, that judicial proceedings would follow her landing. The intrepidity of her conduct was well calculated to please the English Nation, and this daring and inconsiderate step, (a step which her own legal adviser pronounced to be unhappily taken, both as regarded herself, the parliament, the government, and the country) was rendered immediately popular by the epithet of *brave*. Would any but an innocent woman (said the populace) have thus conducted herself?

Whilst the Queen was pursuing her journey from Dover to the metropolis, a royal message was

delivering to parliament ; and papers in sealed bags brought down to both houses. The Queen arrived on the very day on which his Majesty went down to the House of Lords, to give his assent to the first bill passed since his accession. After various ineffectual delays, in the hope of effecting an arrangement, by which the Queen might have again left the kingdom ; the House of Lords proceeded to appoint a secret committee, to examine the documents sent down to them (the House of Commons suspending their proceedings,) and shortly made a report on the same, charging the Queen with an adulterous intercourse with a menial of the name of Bergami, or Pergami, on whom she had conferred, or for whom she had procured, certain titles and orders of distinction. A bill of Pains and Penalties was thereupon brought in by the Earl of Liverpool, after long and elaborate arguments upon the propriety and applicability of the proceeding, had taken place in the House of Peers. The case presented an anomaly, for no statute existed, applicable to a charge of adultery committed by a Queen of England, *abroad and with a foreigner*. This nice distinction took the offence from within the pale of high treason, for inasmuch as the principal was not amenable to the laws of the country ; consequently, the *particeps criminis* could not be judicially recognized by the statutes of treason. Every preliminary of this great measure, was discussed to the very letter, with a degree of eloquence and profound learning which reflected unfading lustre upon the House of Peers, and on the individual noblemen, who led both sides of the debates. The question appeared new, and every aspect of its bearing was

most minutely and rigidly examined; great debate more particularly took place on the question of allowing to the illustrious accused, a list of witnesses, as in cases of high treason; when it was at length decided to open the case, produce the evidence, and allow the Queen an interval, (such as her counsel should deem requisite) to prepare her defence. Thus her Majesty was not only supplied eventually with a list of witnesses; but had the further guide of their sworn testimony. The Attorney General, (Sir R. Gifford,) opened the case according to his instructions, and by command of the House, with little preliminary remark, and certainly without inflation. Her Majesty's cause was less upheld by the evidence of the witnesses against her, (of whom the popular feeling pronounced a pre-judgment of perjury,) than by a deficiency of refutation on her own part. The Queen was most ably, most zealously, and most eloquently defended by Messrs. Brougham, Denman, Lushington and others; and the House bore the license of their harangues with a noble equanimity of patience. After hearing both the charge and the defence, which occupied forty-five days, the House adjourned two days, before it met to debate the principle of the bill; which discussion occupied four days. The second reading was carried by a majority of twenty-eight, the numbers being *for it* 123, *against it* 95. During the progress of the measure, several protests were entered on the Journals of the House, in one of which the Lord Chancellor and the Prime Minister were directly opposed to each other; a brother of the King absented himself wholly from the investigation; a cousin of the King voted against

the measure in all its stages ; both the Ministry and the Opposition were divided amongst themselves, and intermingled their votes ; the preamble of the bill underwent but little alteration in the committee : and in the clause for pronouncing a divorce as part of the pains and penalties, all the Cabinet Ministers, (nine) voted against it. The divorce clause was however carried by a majority of 67, there being contents 129, non-contents 62. Most of the peers who had till this moment contended against the principle of the bill in all its stages, argued (with much plausible appearance of reason) that since the Queen was virtually pronounced guilty of an adulterous intercourse, by the votes of the second reading ; *divorce became the natural consequence, as part of the sentence of the bill*, they therefore voted for it. The third reading of the bill, was carried on the 10th November, by the small majority of nine ; the numbers being for it 108, against it 99 .

Lord Liverpool, (who had brought in the bill, as an individual peer, and not as a member of the administration), immediately moved, that “ the bill be read that day six months,” alleging the smallness of the majority, as the motive *.

* Bill [as read a third time,] entitled, An act to deprive her Majesty, Caroline Amelia Elizabeth, of the title, prerogatives, rights, privileges, and exemptions of Queen Consort of this realm ; and to dissolve the marriage between his Majesty and the said Caroline Amelia Elizabeth.

Whereas in the year one thousand eight hundred and fourteen, her Majesty Caroline Amelia Elizabeth, then Princess of Wales, and now Queen Consort of this realm, being at Milan, in Italy, engaged in her service, in a menial situation, one Bartolomeo Pergami, a foreigner of low station, who had before served in a similar capacity : And whereas after the said Bartolomeo Pergami had so entered the service of her Royal Highness the said Princess of Wales, a most un-

The friends of the Queen received this unexpected reprieve from the bill, after proof of the facts, and admission of their reality, as a total and complete

becoming and degrading intimacy commenced between her said Royal Highness and the said Bartolomeo Pergami, and her said Royal Highness not only advanced the said Bartolomeo Pergami to a high situation in her Royal Highness's household, and received into her service many of his near relations, some of them in inferior and others in high and confidential situations about her Royal Highness's person, but bestowed upon him other great and extraordinary marks of favour and distinction, and conferred upon him a pretended order of knighthood, which her Royal Highness had taken upon herself to institute, without any just or lawful authority: And whereas also her said Royal Highness, whilst the said Bartolomeo Pergami was in her said service, further unmindful of her exalted rank and station, and of her duty to your Majesty, and wholly regardless of her own honour and character, conducted herself towards the said Bartolomeo Pergami, both in public and private, in various places and countries which her Royal Highness visited with indecent and offensive familiarity and freedom, and carried on a licentious, disgraceful, and adulterous intercourse, with the said Bartolomeo Pergami, which continued for a long period of time, during her Royal Highness's residence abroad; by which conduct of her said Royal Highness, great scandal and dishonour have been brought upon your Majesty's family and this kingdom. Therefore, to manifest our deep sense of such scandalous, disgraceful, and vicious conduct on the part of her said Majesty, by which she has violated the duty which she owed to your Majesty, and has rendered herself unworthy of the exalted rank and station of Queen Consort of this realm; and to evince our just regard for the dignity of the crown, and the honour of this nation; we, your Majesty's most dutiful and loyal subjects, the lords spiritual and temporal, and commons in parliament assembled, do humbly entreat your Majesty that it may be enacted; and be it enacted by the King's most excellent Majesty, by and with the advice and consent of the lords spiritual, and temporal, and commons, in this present parliament assembled, and by the authority of the same, that her said Majesty, Caroline Amelia Elizabeth, from and after the passing of this act, shall be, and is hereby deprived of the title of Queen, and of all the prerogatives, rights, privileges, and exemptions, appertaining to her as Queen Consort of this realm; and that her said Majesty shall, from and after the passing of this act, for ever be disabled and rendered incapable of using, exercising, and enjoying the same, or any of them; and, moreover, that the marriage between his Majesty and the said Caroline Amelia Elizabeth be, and the same is hereby, from henceforth for ever, wholly dissolved, annulled, and made void, to all intents, instructions, and purposes whatsoever.

acquittal of her Majesty from all charge of criminality; and proclaimed their sense of her innocence by rejoicings and illuminations; to which the Lord Mayor of London, two days old in office, gave his young countenance. Less riot and disturbance, however, took place than might have been expected; but this was principally owing to the moderation of their antagonists; who (whatever might be their opinion of the guilt or innocence of the Queen, and did not consider a happy escape in the light of an honourable acquittal) were not disposed to thwart the effect of a delusion which appeared in many of its features to portray great generosity and sympathy in supposed sufferings. The Queen returned thanks in the church of the hamlet of the parish in which she resided, and a second time on the 29th of November, at St. Paul's, escorted by the voluntary association of her friends, and was received with due civic honour at Temple Bar by the young Lord Mayor of London. Immense as was the crowd assembled, judicious regulations, prompted by the high responsibility which the young chief magistrate took upon himself on the occasion, prevented all confusion or accident. The King had previously adjourned both Houses of Parliament, without a Speech either from the Throne or by his Commissioners. The Speaker of the House of Commons was hissed as he proceeded to follow the Usher of the Black Rod to the House of Peers; nor did he (there being no Royal Speech, but merely a command to adjourn) again enter the House. This mode of separation appeared to the nation very ungracious, and the disturbed reign of Charles the First was ransacked for precedents.

But the King could hardly have avoided reference to the proceedings of the Lords, and the more especially as the Commons had been adjourned, subject to a call of the House, and to meet only for business, in the event of the Bill of Pains and Penalties coming down to them. On the whole, then, it appeared better to leave the ungracious mode of adjournment for explanation till the next Sessions, when men's minds might have acquired greater power of discrimination, a quality very seldom in request on popular occasions.

Thus far have I brought down (and, I trust, fairly and dispassionately) the outline of this transaction, as it occurred; and with this outline (which will serve, as far as it goes, for both speculations, that of preceding "the restoration of the Queen to all her prerogatives and her court," and that of still "restraining her from their enjoyment and exercise,") I go on, in my assumed character of an historian, to observe on the consequences of such opposite results.

First then, the historian may hereafter portray the consequences of the Queen's restoration to her prerogatives and court, *in the following manner* :—

"Whether the ministers mistook the popular clamour for the real feeling of the nation, or were unwilling to resign their seals of office; or whether they were intimidated by the examples of Spain, Portugal, Naples, and Sicily, all at this time changing their form of government, with more or less of violence; they advised the King *to feel no impediment* to the public reception of the Queen; who, having now the vantage ground, insisted upon the insertion of her name in the Liturgy, and the ex-

punging from the Journals of the House of Lords, of all the proceedings connected with her case, as preliminaries to such reception. The first was readily accomplished; to procure the second, the Prime Minister and the Lord Chancellor (two of the most able ministers and upright men of the day) having retired in disgust, every parliamentary finesse was resorted to; and, at length, with great difficulty, and amid violent debates and mutual recriminations, the point was carried by a majority of one; there being for the expunging 91; against it 90. Bonfires and illuminations, strong beer and roasted beasts were, for a whole week, the order of each successive day; and in so great a joy, few troubled themselves to calculate upon futurity.

“ But short was the delirium, and dreadful the consequences.

“ The King was laughed at, and pitied as a dupe, the Queen was openly scorned, faction was triumphant, no competent administration could be formed, and monarchy was on the wane. Those who had opposed the Queen, not from vindictive motives, but to justify the honour of the crown, felt no longer an attachment to a bauble undignified with the jewel of female chastity. The court was seldom held; when held, neglected; official levees supplied its place. The higher and respectable ranks of life withdrew within their own pure and virtuous associations; and that intermixture of society which is the true essence of a free government and a virtuous court, no longer existed. Rich, vulgar plebeianism took the lead in public. At foreign courts, the younger branches of the nobility experienced great difficulty of reception, not having chosen to be pre-

sented at their own; but when received at such courts, it was considered as a matter of especial favour conceded to their peculiar situation. Thus was the national character subjected to sarcastic insult; and thus was the lustre of the Crown of England obscured; for whatever might have been the personal faults of its sovereigns, as individuals no more exempt from human frailty than the humblest of their subjects, but rather more exposed to their commission; yet the Crown of England had been entitled, for the last century at least, to the homage due to unsullied and unquestionable honour. Such were some of the effects of the Queen's restoration.

“ The evil, however, stopped not here; scarcely had sufficient time elapsed to justify inconsistency, than the truth of the original charges against the Queen was loudly revived by that very press which had forced her innocence down the throats of the nation. The levellers and jacobins, who lorded over public opinion, professed to defend their change, by the discovery of some new evidence which (said they), had we known before, would have produced a different opinion. Thus, the very men who had so conspicuously advocated the cause of the Queen; who had poured into her ears addresses of congratulatory exultation; who had headed her processions, and maddened the populace in her behalf; these very men, who had artfully drawn her to the very precipice of rebellion against her husband and King; these men, from whom she could not but have expected eternal friendship and never-ending adulation, finding her without influence or patronage, became within six months, her scorn-

ful foes. These very men, who had provoked the measure of expunging the whole transaction from the Records of Parliament, and who would fain have burnt, in one huge pile, every paper and every Journal which contained the adulterous evidence, themselves were the first to direct the same press which had borne down all opposition against her, to insult, remind, and mortify her. The reign of terror had commenced. Such were the effects of this unaccountable delusion! Such were the consequences of excusing and exalting vice on the frail plea of political expediency!!

* * * * *

I proceed now (still in the character of a prophetic historian) to mark the consequences which might follow the Queen's continued restriction from the public exercise of her prerogatives.

"On Friday, the 10th of November, this bill of Pains and Penalties passed the third reading, when it was *suspended*, under the form of being read that day six months, and the Lords adjourned to the 23d, the day on which the Commons were to meet, to pursue (if necessary) this important affair. On the 23d both houses met, and were instantly prorogued by Commission, without any Royal Speech. This hasty procurement of separation gave great offence to the Queen's party; the House of Commons being summoned at the very moment when the Solicitor General of the Queen was about to communicate to the House, *a message* from her majesty.

"It was evident that the King could have made no Speech to the Houses of Parliament, omitting all reference to the late momentous transaction. Had his Majesty said, that he regretted the issue of

it, he would have committed himself personally, besides being guilty of the most unconstitutional error ; *that of presuming to know a parliamentary proceeding in transitu*, for as yet the bill was not absolutely abandoned. Had his Majesty, on the other hand, made a Royal Communication, omitting, as he must necessarily have done, all reference to the bill in question ; it might have been inferred, that future proceedings, in any shape, were abandoned ; besides, the interval of adjournment was but for *two* months, and not *seven or eight*, as usually happens, the bill having driven the attendance of both houses to a most unusual lateness. It was deemed therefore most prudent, to encounter the accusation of an ungracious prorogation, for so short a period as two months, rather than be hurried into any hasty avowal. But had there been no such prudent ground for the proceeding, it was sufficiently justified by the subsequent conduct of the Queen ; who assumed to herself an authoritative act of government, having prepared her official adviser with *a message* to be delivered to the Commons House of Parliament ; a step which might well alarm the servants of the Crown, and indeed the whole nation ; for it aimed, in the shape of a message, at a share of the Monarch's power, which the Queen Consort does not possess, *being only a subject* *. It is a radical error, for a Queen Consort to call the

* " The Queen hath also many exemptions and minute prerogatives. For instance, she pays no toll, nor is she liable to any amercement in any Court. But in general, unless where the law has expressly declared her exempted, *she is upon the same footing with other subjects* ; and not his equal : in like manner as in the imperial law : '*Augusta legibus soluta non est.*' " Blackstone, cap. 4. page 220.

King's people, *her people*, or for the King's subjects to call themselves the subjects of the King's wife ; it is a fault of misdirected loyalty. We may call ourselves, by way of courtesy, the Queen's most dutiful and affectionate *servants* ; but legally and constitutionally we can only be the dutiful and affectionate *subjects* of ' the King.'

" During the interval between the prorogation and the meeting of both Houses, the Queen proceeded to Saint Paul's, continued to receive Addresses of Congratulation, and renewed unsuccessfully her application for a Royal Residence. But the people had now time to reflect, to compare, to decide. John Bull is never long misled, and now discovered in the case, premature judgments, audacious falsehoods, attempts at intimidation, and unproved assertions ; above all, a complete absence of all those promises of refutation, which had been so lavishly and so loudly proclaimed ; and the non-performance of which was the more extraordinary, inasmuch as the persons who might, if they could, have given such testimony, were already in England, and at the Queen's command.

" Upon the meeting of Parliament, the Commons desired a conference with the Upper House, and having thereat obtained leave to search the Journals of the Peers, they became constitutionally acquainted with the late proceedings. They found therein a sentence of guilt pronounced, which (to say the least of it,) was tantamount to the effect of a true bill by a grand Jury.

With this impression upon their minds, the Commons soon felt, that the question was now completely in their own hands. The passing of the

Civil List bill was exactly the period, when their influence would become apparent: but they previously determined once more to address the Queen, by the same deputation, which had gone up on a former occasion. This address commenced by the firm and dignified assurance of the unshaken attachment of the Commons to the throne, the constitution, and the altar, and their determination to preserve them from every attempt of factious anarchy. It proceeded to express great regret for the past, and a hope that by conciliatory measures, all further personal legislation would become unnecessary. It assured the Queen that she might rely upon the continued care and attention of the commons; should her Majesty, by sacrificing some part of her high claims, be the means of restoring tranquillity to the public mind. It intimated that some points on which the Queen had heretofore insisted, might be the subject of future and favourable consideration; but that time was necessary to produce a change, which should justify their concession; and it finally dwelt upon the total impossibility, that even should the Queen gain the object of her wishes, it would (under existing circumstances) be attended to her with happiness or peace of mind."

"In answer to this address, the Queen made but few remarks; but principally dwelt on the utter impossibility of quitting a nation, who had treated her with such unbounded generosity, and espoused her cause with such enthusiastic ardour; and finally proposed, that three friends, appointed by herself, should confer with the deputation of the Commons, and agree upon a basis for a complete adjustment." To this it was objected, that the deputation had no

such power of treating; but the difficulty was eventually got over, by their consenting to meet the friends of the Queen as individuals, and subsequently use their exertions to induce the House to adopt such a course of conduct, as might result from the conference; after two meetings it was eventually agreed, *that the Queen should return to Saint Omer's, and find herself placed in the same situation, as she would have been, had her legal advisers delivered to her Lord Liverpool's communication of April, previously to that made by Lord Hutchinson.*

“ This departure was accomplished in so unexpected and in so judicious a manner, as far as the coast, that until the Queen was saluted by the guns at Dover, on her embarkation in a Royal Yacht, it was but just rumoured. The Queen was accompanied by two of her legal advisers, who were met by two others, on the part of the Crown. The departure of the Queen being made known to the Parliament, a most gracious vote of thanks was passed in both Houses; the Commons renewed their assurances, that they would pay all due attention to her Majesty's interests. The Civil List bill was expeditiously passed, and a Royal Message brought down to both Houses by Ministers, in which the King thanked the Commons for the generous provision made for the Queen's future comfort. Her Majesty's Attorney-General, also on his return from Saint Omer's, expressed the Queen's thanks, accompanied by her regret, on leaving England; but attributing the step she had taken to a thorough conviction that she could never hope to promote the happiness of the King; and therefore her next wish was to contribute to the tranquillity of the Kingdom.

He also adverted to the impaired health of the Queen; and the possibility, that she might not again return to the Country of her adoption.

Thus ended an affair which could not possibly have happened at a more critical moment, for whilst it was proceeding, military revolutions were following one another, through the South of Europe; and that the mania did not extend to England, can be attributed solely to the sound principles of the vast majority of the Kingdom; principles which were daily and hourly assailed, by a venal press; and by a system of the most pernicious, irritating, and base political libels, and personal caricatures. But on this occasion the Constitution floated above the passions of the people, safe and unhurt as her Navy rides on the turbulent billow, which dashes against Albion's rocky sides.

“ Amidst these internal commotions, it pleased Providence to bless the kingdom with a most abundant harvest; so that the winter passed over with much less proportionate privations to the humbler classes of the community. Indeed it may be rather said, that such heavenly bounty, administered by charitable hands and feeling hearts, rendered distress unknown. The following Spring found the whole nation, except certain disappointed speculating politicians, in good humour; and the moment was most judiciously seized to administer to the whole United Kingdom, the oath of allegiance. The ceremony was accompanied by every mark of joy and magnificence; it was indeed a national banquet. ON THE TUESDAY, the magistracy took the oaths in the county towns. ON THE THURSDAY, the population took them in every city, town, and

village, in the following manner: Lists had been previously signed, and to each list was prefixed a power by deputation to some person therein named, to take the oath publicly for as many persons as were contained in such list; and by its form, all persons therein subscribed were held to be bound by the oath of allegiance, recited also in such instrument. ON THE SATURDAY, the Army took the oaths, by regiments, squadrons, and detachments, at their individual quarters; and the Navy by fifties, after the form of the general population. This splendid and national rejoicing seemed to annihilate every spark of disaffection.

“In the Autumn, the coronation of his Majesty took place, and the first Act of Grace performed immediately after, was, ‘*to expunge from the Journals of the Lords all the accusatory proceedings connected with the Queen of England.*’

“This last step was considered an act of oblivion, and a compliment to the crown.” The Queen remained abroad during her life, in conformity with her word of honour.”

* * * * *

And now, my faithful subjects, and well-beloved fellow-countrymen, your King takes his leave, recommending the alternative to your attention, and praying to the God and Father of us all, that he will so direct your steps, as to lead both to your temporal and your eternal happiness; praying also that the crown of his forefathers may not be dishonoured on his head, but that mutual love and confidence may render happy both King and People.

My excellent subjects, may God Almighty bless you——Farewell.

GEORGE.

APOLOGY.

Should the readers of the preceding Letter, have entertained doubt of its authenticity, the Author and Publisher beg leave to satisfy those doubts, by stating, "That it is one of those literary fictions, which can only be justified by a good cause." Indeed they feel so high a degree of veneration for the sacred name of "The King," which, (speaking constitutionally), "Never dies;" and so anxious a desire, that nothing directly or indirectly should appear to trifle with its use; that, previous to their determination to publish, they submitted the following Question to the opinion of a most eminent Counsel; which question at once proclaimed the author's motive, and the answer subjoined, contains (we trust) our justification.

THE QUESTION.

Suppose A. writes a letter entitled "A Letter from the King," and having written and published such Letter, states, in a Postscript annexed that such title was adopted to excite curiosity, and extend its political utility; and that such Letter was neither directly or indirectly written by the King; will such acknowledgment take the assumption of the King's name, out of any and every statute of *premunire*?

OPINION.

I am clearly of opinion, that such acknowledgment as is proposed, will take the Letter out of the Statutes of *premunire*. The term and the offence *premunire*, are now merely sounds: but I decidedly think, that the Letter proposed, written in the tone and spirit which is suggested, will not render the writer responsible to *any penalty whatever*.
Temple, December 4th, 1820.

Thus far as to the legality of the act; but should our most gracious Sovereign chance to see a Publication thus imputed to him; we beg leave most respectfully to deprecate any sentiment of personal dissatisfaction, which he may feel at our bold as-

sumption; assuring The King, that he does not possess among his people, more disinterestedly loyal subjects, than the Author and Publisher of this Letter.

POSTSCRIPT TO THE FOURTH EDITION.

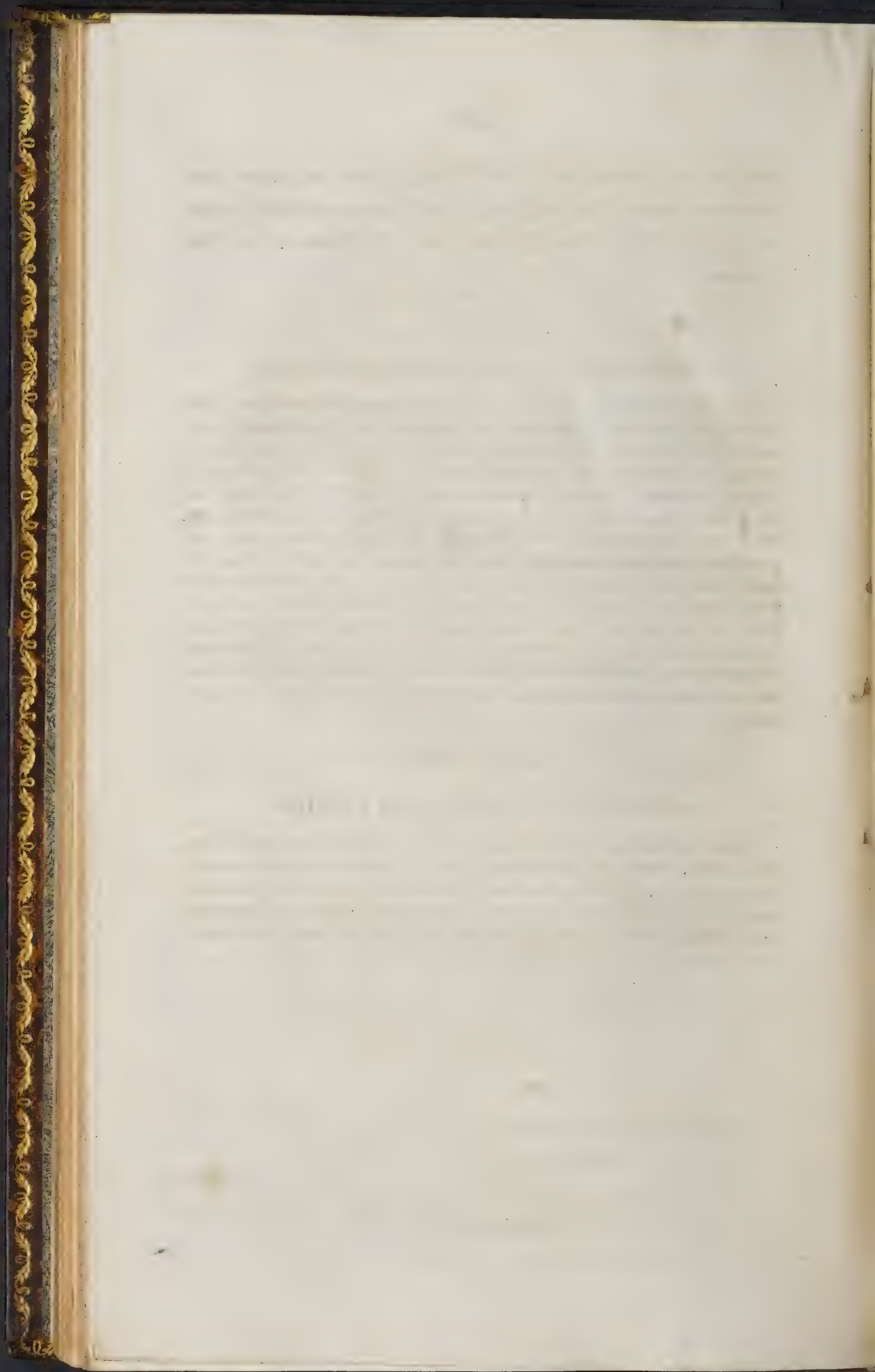
The Amanuensis of this Letter has heard many observations made on this bold attempt of imputing to his Sovereign the sentiments contained therein. He has taken some pains to discover the feelings of the parties raising objections to it; as well as of those who consider it a *timely* boldness. He has the satisfaction of finding, that those are most violent against it, who are unable to answer its argument; and those talk insidiously of this abuse of the King's name, who are great admirers and encouragers of caricatures on his person. In some cases, there is also (even among those who think with himself) a scrupulous feeling as to the mode in which his thoughts are conveyed. Such feeling is conscientious and honourable, but on this occasion, *over nice*. The mode adopted was the only one, capable of producing a dispassionate review of the King's case; it has succeeded beyond the most sanguine expectation, as four editions within a Fortnight testify.

POSTSCRIPT TO THE FIFTH EDITION.

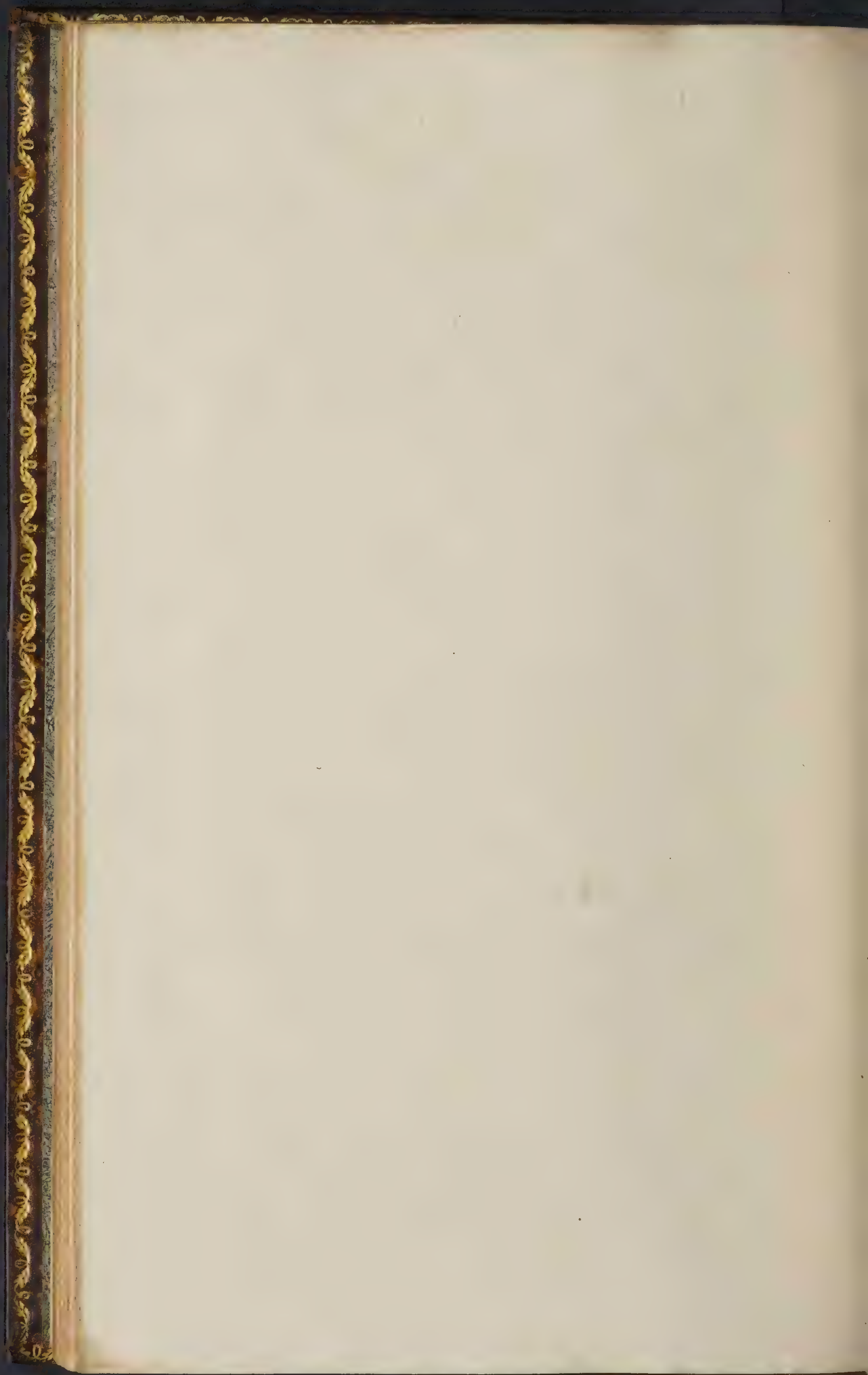
From the moment of deciding upon the bold step of publishing this Letter, it was also determined never to notice any reply, attack, or abuse of it. We are most happy to know, that it has convinced many of the most violent advocates of the Royal Tenant of Brandenburg House, of their injustice towards their noble-minded Sovereign.

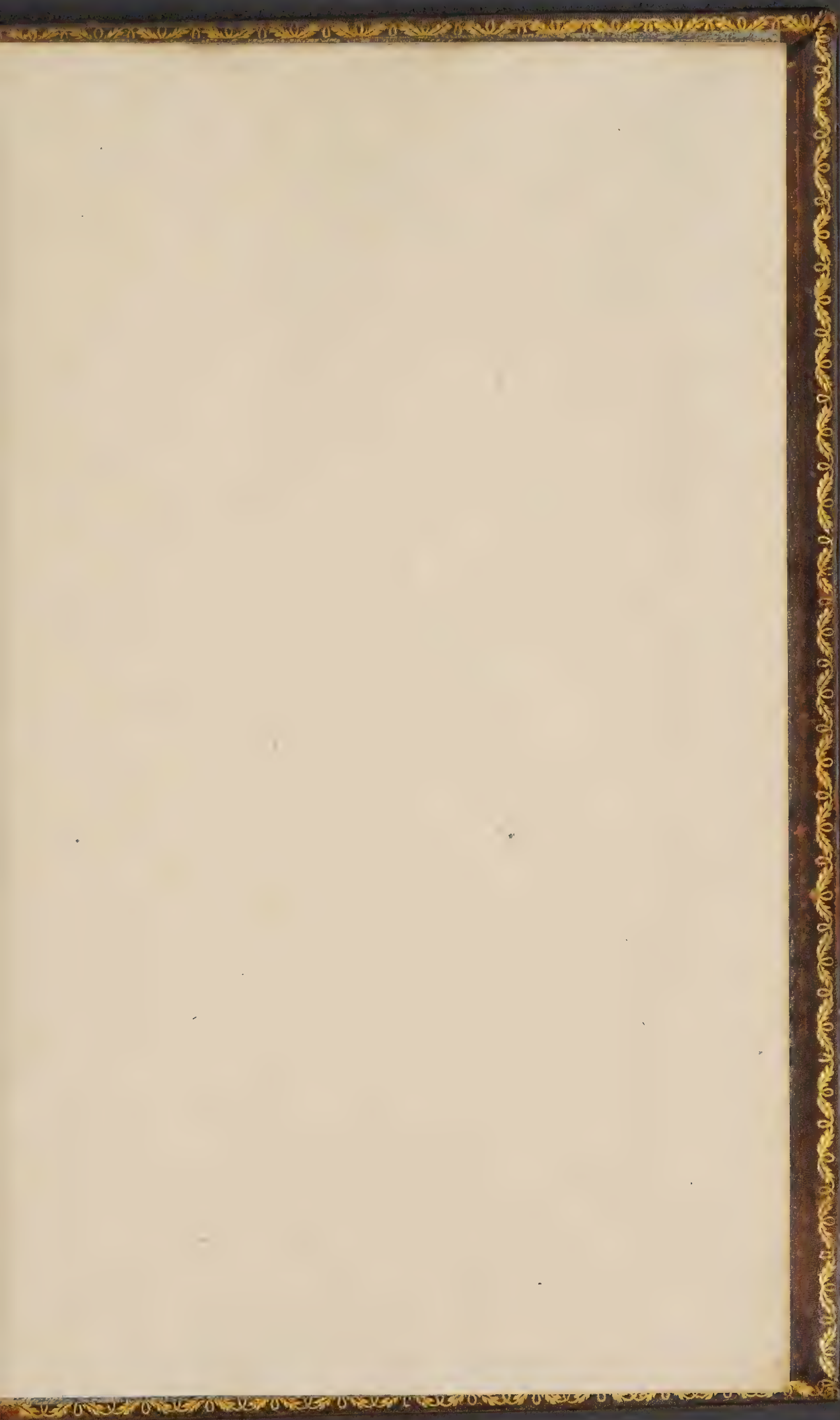
THE END.

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